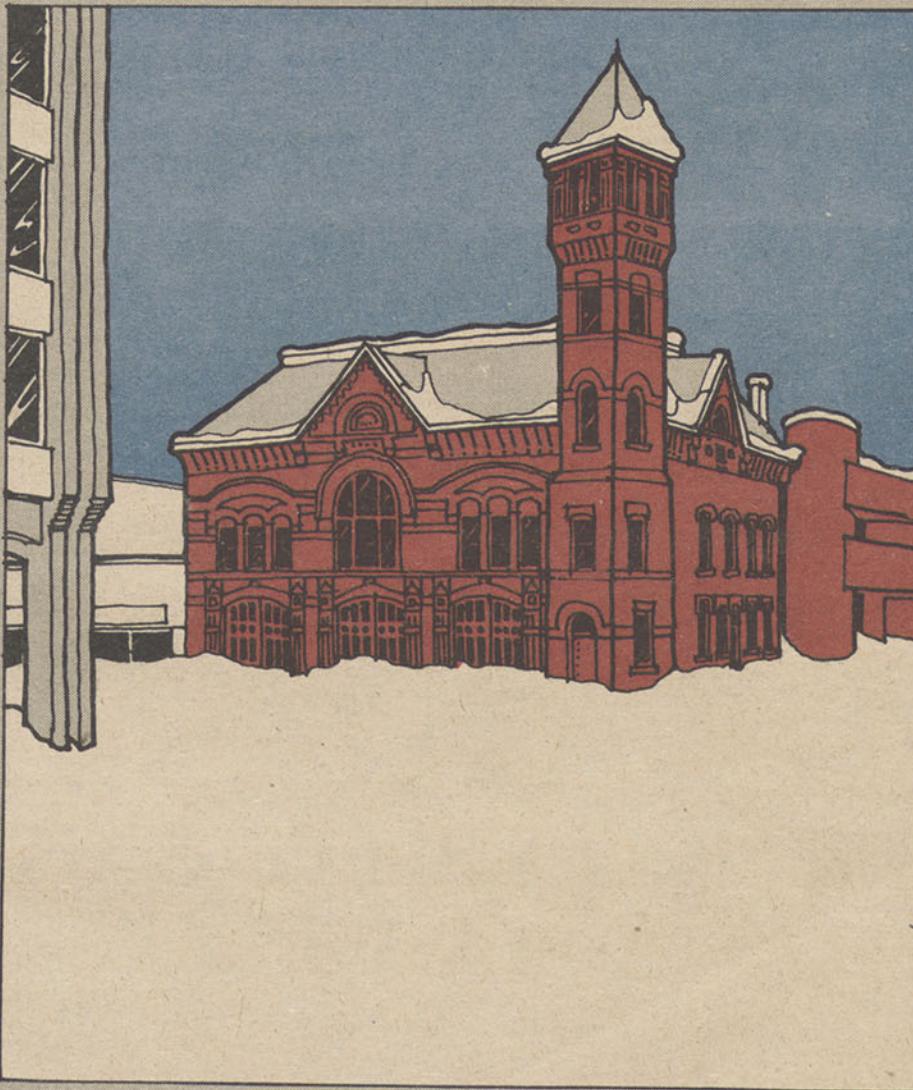


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Ann Arbor Observer

January, 1980

Vol. IV, No.5



Misguided Funds:
A Story of Federal Waste in Ann Arbor

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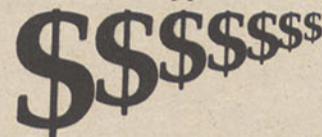
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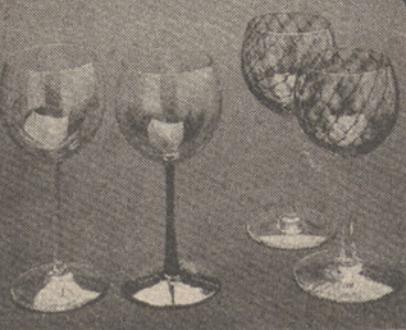
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AROUND TOWN

Parting words from the city forester.

PETER YATES



Ann Arbor City Forester Robert Tate.

After eight-and-a-half years as city forester, Robert Tate is leaving town to assume a teaching position at Rutgers. We talked to the outspoken tree advocate shortly before he left for a final assessment of the health of the city's trees.

First, we asked the puckish Tate about his well-publicized schism with Mayor Lou Belcher last spring when the Republican council majority slashed the budget of the forestry division.

"That's the only time in my eight years here that I've been very perturbed," grumbled Tate. "They started taking pot-shots at a budget they didn't really understand. They believed my people planted posies. We don't. They thought we didn't work in the winter. We do. They could've gotten off their dead asses and gone and looked. Or asked us. Or read our annual reports," Tate harumphed. "Councilman Trowbridge said Kalamazoo had a smaller budget than us. He went over there and saw bunches of green trees. They could've been terminally ill! He didn't know."

We asked Tate what had been the upshot of the impasse. "Well, people started calling in and apparently the Council saw there was grassroots support. So they snuck the money back in and never told anybody. The mayor and the others never spoke to me about it."

"That has nothing to do with my leaving," added Tate firmly. With a new U-M PhD in Forestry in hand, Tate is

going to Rutgers University in New Jersey to start an Urban Forestry program. "60% teaching, 40% research. They wanted a person with some experience, some depth," he said with satisfaction, "not some poor devil who'd have to learn the hard way."

Starting January 15, Tate will be teaching a course in how to maintain an urban forest—"and that doesn't mean how to trim trees," he said, but "how to seek funds, how to get along with people, how to manage a resource."

We asked Tate what he meant by the phrase "urban forest."

"Some say it's just street trees," said Tate. "But if you go up in an airplane and look down on Ann Arbor, you'll see a 'crown canopy.' That's the urban forest." All the trees in Ann Arbor, whether in parks, streets, or people's backyards, have been Tate's bailiwick. "That's a fairly new idea. That's why I've supplied guidance and tree clinics for private owners." Tate added that both town and people "got a lot out of those for a small amount of time and money."

Does Ann Arbor have any serious problems with its "forest," we asked.

"The average citizen can't see it but we're falling behind," warned Tate. "For example, urban Norway maples should live for sixty years. Ours are only lasting forty-five. More money is needed. But we need to find creative ways of funding."

One idea that Tate definitely likes could give the next city forester "100,000 pairs of eyes." Called the Guerilla Urban Forest Crew in New York City, Tate suggests Auxiliary City Foresters for Ann Arbor. "People look at trees as they walk their dogs," he said. They sign up for a block, get some training, keep in touch, maybe even do things to trees using specialized city equipment.

Tate is looking forward to living in "the hook" of New Jersey. He has bought a 200-year old house six miles north of Princeton in the rural, rolling countryside of the "garden state."

But, all in all, "this has been a fun place to work," concluded Tate. "If you've got to live in the midwest—speaking as an ex-Californian—there's no nicer place than Ann Arbor."

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The day you could hear Susan Stemberg breathe.

There was a nice moment up at WUOM in mid-December when engineer Mark Murphy first connected the U-M radio station to the Westar I communications satellite. Murphy's action completed a radio circuit that had originated a fraction of a second before from the headquarters of the National Public Radio network in Washington, D.C. — a space-age connection achieved with the help of an old patch cord and a new, white, parabolic "dish" one floor above WUOM on the roof of the orange brick Literature, Science and the Arts Building on State Street.

Murphy let us watch as he made the final hook-up. A rotund, ruddily-bearded man in jeans and lumberjacket, he had an intent look on his face as he surveyed a small room filled from floor to ceiling with black metal cabinets covered with dials, fluctuating meters, and glowing pilot lights. With a short electrical "patch" cord in hand, Murphy reached toward a rectangular array of 144 silver-rimmed holes. "It's an old patch cord," said Murphy apologetically, working one red-clad tip in and out of a hole in the center of the top row. He paused, frowned, and slowly inserted the other end of the cord into the bottom right hole. "Do you hear it? That's it! The satellite!" said Murphy, breaking out into an easy flow of relieved laughter that was considerably more pleasant to hear than the shrill and steady tone he had just pulled in from the 12-foot tall cylinder spinning 23,000 miles above the equator.

At 5 PM that afternoon, Susan Stemberg and other luminaries on NPR's locally popular 90-minute news show "All Things Considered" sent their first broadcast to Ann Arbor via the satellite connection.

"You can hear them breathe," said operations manager Ray Klatt.

And, indeed, Stemberg's every breath was almost disconcertingly audible, as was the rustle of newscaster Diane Diamond's script and the surprising treble bells in the program's sprightly opening music. Network high fidelity sound had never before been audible on WUOM.

Not only will the sound quality of network programs be improved, but also the kind and quantity of available programs. WUOM will be able to receive programs relayed from any of the 204 U.S. public stations, each of which is installing a dish. Live concerts and news events from Europe and Asia will be forthcoming, as well. Station manager Neal Bedford forecasts "networks of interest" linking far-flung U.S. stations whose listeners share a common interest in jazz or urban affairs or regional events.

WUOM will also be beaming programs around the nation and possibly the world. A U-M Musical Society concert in the Rackham Auditorium will be beamed aloft when the Concord Quartet is in town in late January. Worldwide broadcasts from Hill Auditorium are in the discussion stage. And a weekly satellite edition of Ed Burrows' arts "magazine," "The Eleventh Hour," will radiate around Michigan via the regional "up-link" transmitter at MSU.

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AROUND TOWN/continued

Selling gold and silver: not as easy as you might think.

If you think that the gold in gold jewelry or the silver in tableware can do much to help you during times like these when money's tight, think again. From what we can tell, it's no easy matter selling that unwanted gold brooch or silver coffee service as scrap metal through legal channels.

The trouble is, there's a jungle out there, with rules based on the mutual distrust between seller and buyer. Buyers of gold know more about the subject than sellers, as a rule. Sellers, in fact, commonly have an unrealistic notion of how much gold is in an object they own. The average woman's wedding ring contains between 1½ and 2 dwt (pennyweight) of pure gold. That means only about \$30 to \$40 worth of gold, even at today's inflated prices.

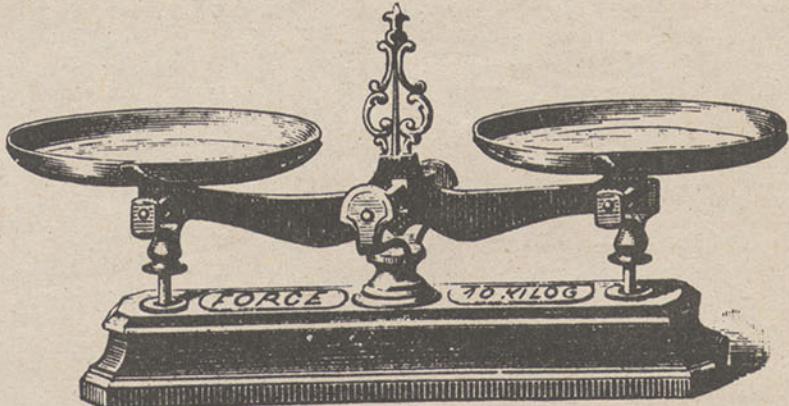
Sellers rarely realize that a jeweler is several trading steps removed from the smelter who extracts the pure gold from the submitted alloy and every step involves some profit-taking.

At Schlenderer's, Dwight Johnston reports an increased interest in selling scrap gold ever since gold started to rise from \$35 an ounce. With gold now selling on the bullion market for \$450 an ounce, Schlenderer's still isn't buying scrap. Why not? Johnston answers, "How do we know the gold they bring in here to sell belongs to them? Anybody can come in off the street and say they own the stuff. Nobody keeps sales records for things like that. The chance of inadvertently acting as a fence for thieves is too great — we

robberies? Where can honest people who are cash-poor sell their silver, for that matter? One clue may be in those large ads you see in the newspapers, placed by companies that come into town for a day of buying at a motel location. "Those outfits sound like legal fences to me," one jeweler told us.

At Fort Jewelry and Loan, a pawn broker in Lincoln Park, we were told, "We check ID and we really match up the picture on the driver's license with the customer's face. Then, if we make a deal, copies of it are sent to both state and local police, along with the customer's thumbprint."

An Ann Arbor gold refiner who works with dental alloys never buys gold from private parties. "Don't put my name in your magazine, I'd be bothered to death," he said, before agreeing to talk with us. "I know what a buyer's problems are. What is the true karat content? Anyone can stamp anything he wants on there. It's easy to do. French and Italian markings are different, so what about those? Is the piece owned or stolen? How much money must the buyer tie up, and for how long, while he accumulates a reasonable amount, say 10 ounces, to make it worth sending it off to the smelter? All these uncertainties are bound to affect the buyer's offer, so you will never maximize your price with a jeweler or pawn broker. You can always deal with refiners directly. They are listed in big-city Yellow Pages. Send them your gold by mail. That



just don't handle it."

Jim Hart at Seyfried's says they buy gold only from customers they know well. All jewelers, however, will credit customers with the gold from old settings when they come in to have gems reset.

A complicating factor in scrap gold transactions is that, until recently, the karat stamp on gold was often grossly inaccurate. "We've seen alloys stamped 14K that melted out as low as 9K," Johnston says. What about silver? "Silver has tripled in price recently," Hart reports. "It's now at \$18 a troy ounce (about 10% more than a grocery-store ounce), but we don't handle it at Seyfried's."

So where are thieves selling the silver they've garnered in the rash of recent

way, though, you get no assurance on price ahead of time. Direct dealing with a refiner makes sense if you have a lot of gold, say 10 ounces or more. But to get your best price, go where the buying competition is strongest — in the big-city gold buying centers. New York City's gold dealers are all clustered together on 47th Street. They post their prices prominently every day, and it's a simple matter for a seller to go from one to another to find the best offer. Gold and silver bullion prices are listed every day in *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*.

Whatever you do, don't let your interest in gold tempt you into the commodities market," our friend the gold refiner warned us. "You'll be eaten alive. That's for experts only."

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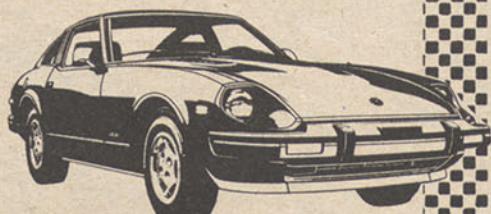
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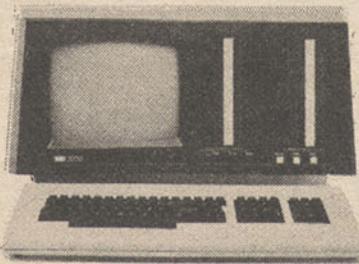
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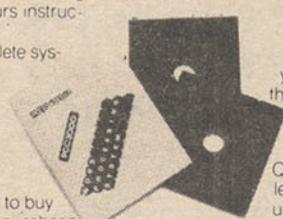


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Jacobson's

Misguided Funds

The story of how Ann Arbor uses millions of dollars in federal community development grants is a good example of how Washington wastes the taxpayer's money.

By ED WALTERS

In recent years Ann Arbor's older neighborhoods have experienced changes which contrast dramatically with the central cities of larger urban areas like Detroit. While many of America's older central cities are experiencing an urban crisis yet to be solved, Ann Arbor's older housing has become more and more attractive to middle and upper-middle income families.

Even the traditionally lower-income sections of central Ann Arbor have been affected by this trend. The central area's houses may be more worn and closer together, but close-in neighborhoods have been carried along in Ann Arbor's steady climb towards becoming one of the Midwest's most affluent cities.

Why, then, are these central Ann Arbor neighborhoods the target for millions of dollars in federal aid from a program designed to stop the urban blight that has devastated cities like Detroit, St. Louis, and Cleveland? The federal Community Development Block Grant program was intended to ease the impact of declining investment and the deterioration of housing stock in the nation's urban centers. Should its funds be used to help central Ann Arbor, where private investment is aggressive and where people compete to find older homes to renovate?

Nixon applies pressure

Over the last four years, Ann Arbor has received more than nine million dollars in Community Development Block Grants, the Department of Housing and Urban Development's main weapon against urban distress. To understand why Ann Arbor receives these federal funds it's necessary to look back at how the federal legislation to help the nation's cities was formed.

Before Congress passed the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program in 1975, federal aid to distressed cities was distributed through a system of categorical grants. A series of laws had been passed in the Fifties and Sixties to deal with specific urban problems. For instance, the Housing Act of 1961 set up open space, urban beautification, and historic renovation grants, and the Housing Act of 1965 set up water, sewer, and neighborhood facility construction pro-

grams. By the late Sixties the system for administering aid had become so complex and confusing that bureaucratic skill and grantsmanship had often become more important than a community's needs in determining how much money it got.

By the early Seventies the grant programs' problems had become acute, and several attempts at legislative reform had failed. While the Democratic Congress and the Nixon administration agreed on the need to simplify the grant procedure, they differed significantly on the form new legislation should take.

In his 1971 State of the Union address, President Nixon introduced the New Fed-

The Democratic Congress felt that the Nixon administration's proposals would allow local governments to ignore pressing urban problems and the needs of lower-income or minority groups, so it insisted on substantial federal review over how the funds were spent. Members of Congress were also concerned that under the three-part qualifying formula, severely distressed cities that already had urban renewal programs would lose funds to new, less deserving, recipients of the money. Under a Congressional proposal, funding under the program was linked to the amount of dollars a city had received from HUD in the past.

and private investment and reinvestment in housing and other physical facilities, and in related public and social services, resulting in the growth and persistence of urban slums and blight and the marked deterioration of the quality of the urban environment."

Something for everyone

The CDBG statement of purpose describes a set of problems which do not even remotely apply to central Ann Arbor. In fact, the city's urban problems in recent years have been the exact opposite.

Ann Arbor has received millions in CDBG dollars not so much because of the city's needs as because of the 'something for everyone' impulse that guided the writing of the CDBG legislation.

eralism, a program that returned large amounts of federal tax revenues to state and local governments. The administration had decided that it was time to stop federal leadership in attempts to solve what were basically local problems. 130 categorical grants were to be combined into six yearly grants that included federal aid to education, job training, transportation, law enforcement, and rural and urban community development.

The programs of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) were to be consolidated into a single yearly grant. The grants were to have minimum qualifying standards so that tax dollars would be spread out to cover thousands of cities they had never reached before. Almost every city with more than 50,000 residents would qualify. The size of a city's grant would be determined by a formula which compared a city's gross population, the incidence of poverty, and the amount of overcrowding with that in other cities nationwide. HUD would have little control over how funds were spent, and local officials (whom the administration had decided had a better chance of solving local problems than HUD's bureaucrats) would have almost total discretion over how they spent the money.

The Nixon administration broke the impasse by applying heavy pressure on Congress. In 1973, HUD Secretary Romney announced that the administration was going to stop funding the categorical grant programs it considered ineffective. Federal funding for subsidized housing and public works projects were impounded immediately, and other urban aid programs would be cut off later that year. Faced with the prospect of a total halt in urban aid, and lacking the necessary votes to override a Presidential veto, Congress quickly passed the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, which incorporated most of the features of the administration's legislative design.

As a result of the administration's insistence on local flexibility in the use of the funds, the law's definition of acceptable CDBG programs is ambiguous. In its preamble to the act, Congress did outline the needs it felt the fund should be used for: "The Congress finds and declares that the Nation's cities, towns, and smaller urban communities face critical social, economic, and environmental problems arising in significant measure from — (1) the growth of population in metropolitan and other urban areas, and the concentration of persons of lower-income in central cities; and (2) inadequate public

The CDBG formula that guarantees a share of federal funds to cities of Ann Arbor's size also uses two of Ann Arbor's most attractive features as indicators of urban distress, and therefore actually increases the amount of funding the city receives. First, the U-M's 40,000 students, most of whose incomes are minimal, lower the city's average income levels considerably, making Ann Arbor look poorer than it really is. Thus Ann Arbor qualifies for more CDBG funds because of its misleading average income statistics.

Second, the drafters of the CDBG legislation assumed that cities with older housing stock like Ann Arbor's suffered from significant urban problems. They made the number of homes that were built before 1940 another determinant of how much CDBG money a city receives. In many other towns older housing is frequently in dilapidated condition, but in Ann Arbor an older home is a resource that will be snapped up by renovation-minded buyers. So Ann Arbor's many older homes actually help the city to qualify for more CDBG funds.



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The formula funding provision of the CDBG program was designed to remove the influence of grantsmanship from the allocation of federal funds and to guarantee a more objective and equitable distribution of the money. Instead, it replaces one form of unfair bias with another: a simplistic statistical formula that doesn't accurately reflect a community's needs.

Ann Arbor had been one of the cities whose bureaucrats have had great success getting funds from HUD programs. When the CDBG program replaced Model Cities as the city's main channel of HUD funds, these city employees assumed the responsibility for the planning of the new program. After city council replaced the quarrelsome Model Cities board as the chief disposer of funds, the use of CDBG funds began to reflect the various constituents and participants in the city's political process.

Laurie Wargelin, who was the city's first CDBG director, remembers, "In the initial year, priorities were set by the citizens' committees and council at one-third for social services, one-third for physical development, and one-third for housing. Various groups throughout the city competed for the funding, including departments within city hall — like the streets department, and the parks department."

For four years this original tripartite split has remained intact, because any increase in one group's funding, or the introduction of new uses for the funds, means making a politically unpopular cut in another's.

In the name of rehabilitation

Over the last four years a half-million CDBG dollars have been spent in Ann Arbor annually to rehabilitate about eighty lower-income homes. The home rehabilitation program operates on a voluntary basis, with households contacted through CDBG publicity and contacts in neighborhood groups. Individuals who express interest and who qualify under

HUD's income guidelines have their homes checked by a CDBG inspector for violations of the city building code for other repairs and renovations the owner might want to have done. CDBG then hires a contractor to do the work.

The rehabilitation doesn't stop at bringing a structure up to code, or making it a safe place to live, but lets the owner make improvements that he or she could never otherwise afford. In fact, the large amount of money available through the program and wide range of improvements it allows means that lower-income households in the program can make improvements to their homes that some middle-income and even high-income households couldn't afford.

CDBG rehabilitations, which range in cost from \$5,000 to \$15,000, differ from house to house, since the amount of code work that needs to be done varies, and because each homeowner has different ideas for how the 40% of the grant or loan that can be used for general improvements to the property should be used. More expensive renovations typically involve extensive rewiring and plumbing work, new roofs, gutter work, new or repaired porches, and new kitchens and bathrooms. CDBG funds have also been used to tear down dead trees, make curb cuts for new driveways, raise roofs to add second stories to homes, and add on new rooms.

The housing rehabilitation program was originally conceived of by HUD as a way to supplement the lack of money for home maintenance that leads to the physical deterioration of neighborhoods. CDBG funds are used to try to prevent neighborhoods from coming apart at the seams. But Ann Arbor doesn't need this kind of treatment. As CDBG documents point out, there is plenty of private investment available for the renovation of the central neighborhoods' housing stock. While the idea of fixing up the homes of lower-income households is noble, federal funds could be better used in areas where private investment is not an alternative.

ZONTA International

The Zonta Club of Ann Arbor will sponsor a series of breakfasts on topics of interest to women to be held the first and third Wednesdays of each month beginning February 6, 1980. Check the February issue of the Ann Arbor Observer for place, time, topics, speakers, and how to make reservations.



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According to the Ann Arbor CDBG staff, the chief goal of the central Ann Arbor rehab program is to prevent market displacement of lower-income households. Market displacement occurs when a lower-income family living in an older neighborhood can't afford the high cost of maintaining its home. The family is left with the choice between moving out or letting its home deteriorate. Since there is a line of buyers waiting to pay inflated prices for the home, the odds are that the household will end up leaving the community. Ann Arbor CDBG director Barry Tilmann justifies the housing rehabilitation program by pointing out that it helps these people enjoy a fully code-compliant, nice-looking, and liveable unit without placing an overwhelming burden on their income.

Lacking the physical problems that would provide a clear target for the use of CDBG funds, the local program has become little more than a supplement to the city's budget.

Most Ann Arborites probably agree that the city's economic and social diversity is one of its most attractive features, and that it gives community life here a more cosmopolitan flavor than in all-white, all-rich enclaves like Birmingham or Grosse Pointe. The Ann Arbor CDBG goal of minimizing the displacement of lower-income families was designed around this consensus.

However, there are indications that spending so much money on home rehabilitations actually *increases* the market displacement pressures on lower-income families instead of minimizing them. Areas that have some run-down or vaguely shabby houses are not nearly as attractive to real estate investors as areas where every house is physically sound, freshly painted, and in good repair. By improving the lower-income neighborhoods, CDBG is probably increasing the demand for housing there. This process is now occurring in the near northwest neighborhood around Fountain and Felch, and in the north central neighborhood around Beakes. After nearly a decade of being the targets for federal funds, they are now experiencing substantial buying by middle-income and upper-middle-income households. Increased demand raises the selling prices of homes and makes selling out that much more tempting to a lower-income family.

Combine the increase in property values with the value added to a home by CDBG's extensive renovation work, and it looks like CDBG is, in effect, packaging these homes and neighborhoods for sale to the highest bidder. It's doubtful whether the drafters of the CDBG legislation intended to help lower-income families by guaranteeing them a big profit on the resale of their homes, but that may be the main lasting positive effect of the local CDBG strategy.

The politics of road repair

Even though the long-term effects of the Ann Arbor CDBG rehabilitation program may turn out to be the opposite of what the legislation's drafters had in mind, at least it has effectively improved the living conditions of a number of the city's disadvantaged residents. But the \$1.36 million in CDBG funds that have gone for Ann Arbor road repair cannot even be said to have this redeeming value.

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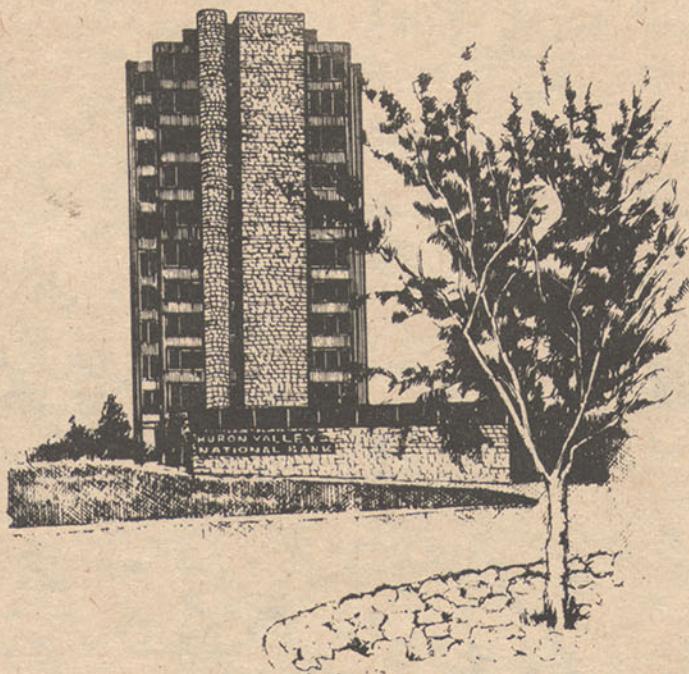
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After the yearly CDBG street-paving budget is set through negotiations between the CDBG staff and other city hall departments, a list of streets that can be paved is generated by the streets department. Citizen committees then pick those streets from the list that they think should be paved. The road repair paid for by CDBG funds can only be done in designated neighborhood strategy areas, but in Ann Arbor these areas have been set up to cover a full quarter of the city's geographic area, allowing the city wide latitude in choosing which streets to pave.

For the last three years CDBG has concentrated paving efforts in the near northwest and northside neighborhoods, which for a long time held a large percentage of the city's lower-income citizens. Parts or all of Sunset, Fountain, Felch, Miller, Daniel, Spring, Summit, Hiscock, Pontiac Trail, Pear, Apple and Traver have been paved. The near northwest neighborhood now probably has the best-paved streets in the city. In fact, some of the streets paved in the target neighborhoods were originally in better condition than streets the city wouldn't have bothered to fix in other neighborhoods.

Road repair has been the hottest Ann Arbor political issue of the late seventies. The Republican party took over control of the mayor's office and the city council in 1978 after campaigning on a 'street repair' platform. Significantly, the 1978 road repair budget, which doubled the amount of CDBG money to be used for street paving, was passed in June of that year, less than two months after the Republican victory.

The local scramble for CDBG dollars

The third part of the local CDBG funding triad is an extensive social services program. Almost 40% of the Ann Arbor CDBG budget is committed to the support of eighteen local agencies, including the Model Cities Legal and Health Centers and other health, senior citizen, legal, and child-care organizations. Under original CDBG legislation, social services grants were intended as a minor prop in a city's program of physical revitalization. The national average spending on social services by local CDBG programs is 6%. Ann Arbor's 40% budgeted for social services is so high that HUD is now giving it a long hard look for possible violation of the intent and provisions of the law.



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The implication is not that the social services in Ann Arbor funded by CDBG are necessarily undeserving of such funding, but that Ann Arbor is getting a lot bigger share of social services money from CDBG than most cities, many of which may need them more than does Ann Arbor. How such money is allocated is not ultimately an issue Ann Arborites alone can answer. It is a national issue requiring tough prioritizing decisions by Congress. Clearly such tough decisions have not been made.

Since road paving is so important to Ann Arbor voters, it's not surprising that the city's CDBG program was used to cough up the extra money the city needed to repair more of its roads.

Lacking the physical problems or deterioration that would provide a clear target for the use of CDBG funds, the local program has become little more than a supplement to the city's budget, making it possible for Ann Arbor to start programs it otherwise couldn't afford, but programs that have little to do with saving deteriorating urban environments.

Like an audience scrambling after dollars thrown from the stage, the yearly process of allocating the CDBG monies to a crowd of social service agencies, city hall departments, and other local interests has become more of a competitive process than a planned one. Fitting the results of these budget decisions into what looks like a reasonable community development strategy demands a great deal of creative effort from the local CDBG staff.

"The city's application to HUD is supposed to set out long-term and short-term objectives for the community," Wargelin points out. "But here in Ann Arbor there's a tendency to look first at the budget issues, at the splitting up of the pie, and then have the staff write a plan that fits that budget into a plan for HUD."

This sort of post-facto planning forces the city's CDBG department to come up with some unusual justifications for the program's direction and effects on the city. When Barry Tilman, the current CDBG program director, was quizzed about the logic or propriety of some of the CDBG spending that goes on locally, he claimed that the department is not responsible for the program's direction or integrity. "It's a completely different form of urban planning," he said. "As I point out to people, the plan merges after the fact. Resource allocation decisions have been taken out of the hands of the planners and put into the hands of the citizens. If we're successful, they share the credit. If we fail, they deserve the blame. From a planner's point of view, that's a great position to be in. We don't have to take the rap."

Ann Arbor's experience with CDBG points out some of the failures in the design of the federal Housing and Community Development Act. While Congress was able to include program restrictions that made the act useful only in urban areas where there is serious blight, the Nixon administration managed to extend the act's funding to include many cities, like Ann Arbor, that don't need it. In Ann Arbor, which doesn't face significant physical problems, the program is stuck with physical development solutions, and the federal government and the taxpayers, are stuck with the bill for such misdirected spending.

Although there is considerable competition in Ann Arbor over how the CDBG funds should be used, there has been little or no local criticism of the CDBG program itself. This type of federal spending is particularly insidious because no one wants to say "no" to federal funds. Conservatives are happy with the program because the funds can be spent on expensive basic services like road repairs that keep property taxes down, and liberals approve because the funds at least partially aid the city's disadvantaged.

Both views ignore the significance of Ann Arbor's use of federal funds which were designed to combat serious urban problems. By eagerly accepting the funding, conservatives participate in the wasteful government they traditionally abhor. By supporting programs that are poorly conceived and ineffective, liberals risk contributing to the public's growing resentment of all social spending programs. □

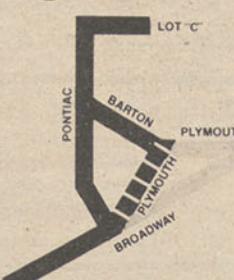
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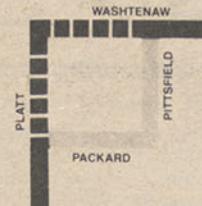
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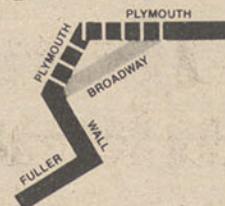
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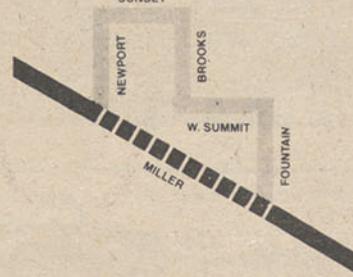
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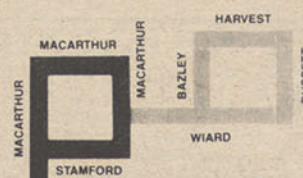
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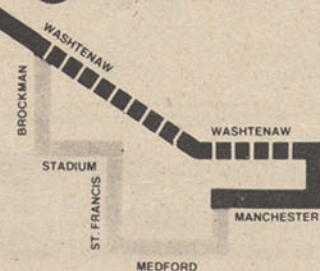
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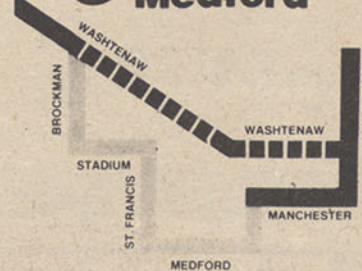
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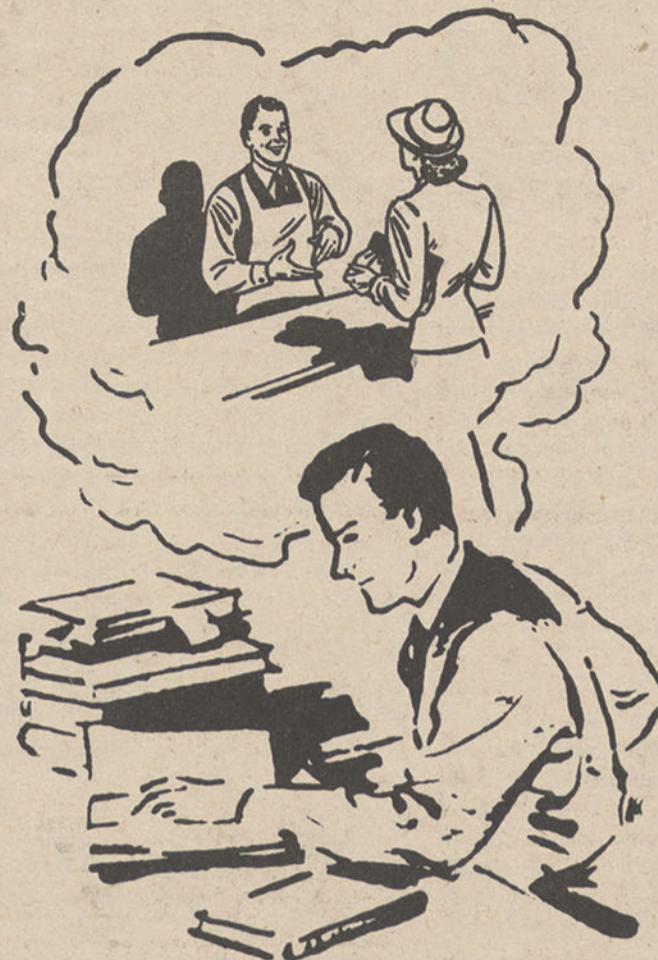
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Jay Platt of WEST SIDE BOOKS: How a naval architect found happiness selling used books.

Used book shops have a certain mystique, deriving in part from the allure of their unpredictable volumes, often rare or quaint, and also from the special knowledgeability of their customers. People who frequent used book shops usually aren't trying to keep up with the current best-sellers; they come because they have a particular interest in a subject that can't be satisfied by new books.

The ideal image of the used book shop begins with a charming old building. The bookseller leads a peaceful life, sitting behind a desk smoking a pipe, occasionally getting up to dust off a shelf of books. A cat will likely be curled up on a window sill.

That vision is part of what Jay Platt had in mind back in 1970, when it came to him that he should "get into books," as he puts it. And, sure enough, his West Side Book Shop at 113 West Liberty fits the image. The image of the bookseller's unbroken serenity is an illusion, Jay points out, but visually his shop is the epitome of the mellow old book shop. It occupies what's unquestionably the nicest Victorian brick storefront in town, restored so sensitively as not to look newly refurbished at all. A friendly black dog named Arlo is usually poking around the shop or lying on the floor. The whole place, with its wood floor, old prints on

the walls, and rows upon rows of neatly shelved, carefully selected books, has an air of reassuring stability quite different from the atmosphere of the typical store selling new books, where this month's bestsellers are brightly and boldly displayed in quantity, conveying by their inconsistency the here-today, gone-tomorrowness of most new books.

Like the books he sells, Jay Platt, 35, conveys a sense of continuity. Looking like an archetypical graduate student or writer, he wears steel-rimmed glasses, a neatly-trimmed mustache, a v-neck sweater-vest, an open-collar shirt, and corduroy pants. He is often found at his desk by the bookshop window, surrounded by piles of recently-purchased books not yet shelved, busy pricing and examining them, talking with customers and making sales, or going over correspondence and reading other dealers' want lists. No matter how many people are waiting to buy or sell books, no matter how many boxes of books await his inspection, Jay remains calm and unflappable. If you get the feeling he's a person who's found his proper place in life, he'd say you're right.

The story of Jay and his store living happily ever after has the elements of a contemporary fairy tale in an urban setting. He even met his wife Marilyn when she came to work in his shop. In 1967, when Jay graduated from the U-M naval architecture program, he couldn't picture

himself designing oil tankers at some large engineering firm. The romance of sailing, after all, was what had led him to take up naval architecture. For two years he worked as a model boat tester at the U-M Ship Hydrodynamics Lab in the basement room looking onto the Engineering Arch. He then traveled around for awhile, sailing in California and also visiting New York City. In New York a friend took him to the Fourth Avenue booksellers' row, a street just northeast of Greenwich Village, where used and rare bookshops used to be clustered. There he experienced what he calls "a kind of revelation." "I knew I wanted to work in a book store. I have always been interested in books, but I had never thought much about used books. It had never really dawned on me that one could make a living selling used books."

Back in Ann Arbor in 1971, Jay got a temporary job at the Student Book Service, a textbook store run by Ned and Fred Shure, which was then closing out on South University. Jay ended up working for the Shures for three and a half years at Ned's Book Store in Ypsilanti.

He also began collecting old books by going to shops and book sales. His specialties were polar exploration and nautical subjects. He started subscribing to the Antiquarian Bookman's Weekly in preparation for the day when he would own his own shop.

"I had been drifting," he explains. "But getting into books, I knew I was doing something I'd want to be doing the rest of my life."

After Ned's, Jay worked at David's Books in the grandest and most short-lived phase of its fluctuating history, when it occupied all of what is now Bass shoes, Ram's Head Leather, and Albert's Copying on East Liberty. Jay's friend, Frank Misplon, approached him about starting a bookstore which Jay would run, and by great good luck, the space at 113 West Liberty opened up at the same time. Passing by it daily on his way to and from work, Jay had earlier thought it would make a fine book shop.

Frank, a silent partner, supplied \$3000 cash in the venture. Jay contributed his book collection, worth \$3000 wholesale, and the two partners took out a \$3000 loan. The West Side Book Shop opened its doors in 1975.

In 1975 downtown hadn't completely become the thriving and rather chic place it is today. Many suburban residents still thought of the 100 block of West Liberty mainly in terms of rundown bars. The success of the West Side Book Shop was by no means assured. There were anxious days in which little was sold — two days during the first year brought no sales at all — and Jay had plenty of time to dust the shelves and worry about where the money would come from.

Four years later, Jay finds he's doing better than he had expected. He turns the stock over about one time a year, the norm in the used book business. He has one full-time employee, Shelly Kelly; his wife Marilyn, about to have a baby, works part-time. While Jay's income will never hit the upper tax brackets, it's comfortable. In addition, his original investment in the business has by now increased substantially in value.

Most new businesses require the owners to contribute a period of donated labor, but from the start the store provided Jay with a living, albeit a frugal one. A year ago he bought out his partner, Frank, and now, after making payments to him and meeting fixed monthly expenses of about \$2200 for rent, utilities, salaries, and supplies, he's able to take out about \$15,000 a year. Figuring that he works about 3000 hours a year, that works out to about \$5 an hour, but money is not the bottom line at all as far as Jay is concerned.

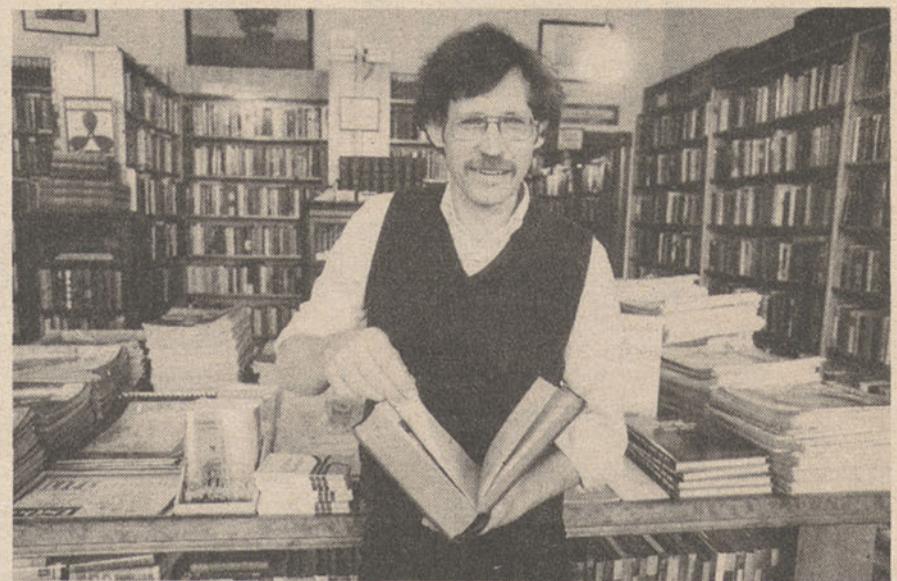
"The store isn't a business in the traditional sense," he points out, "though it fits into a business framework." Selling used books is actually a way of life, and a very pleasant one for Jay. Simply acquiring the necessary knowledge to set up the business and purchase stock usually takes years of experience with books — experi-

ence gained by browsing around other dealer's shops, going to auctions, and checking out book sales. The big AAUW (American Association of University Women) book sales held here and elsewhere in the fall offer an excellent opportunity to survey huge quantities of used books (Ann Arbor's sale fills the Michigan Union ballroom) and see what titles are common and which are rare.

Knowledge about books is what gives one dealer an edge on his competitors. What titles and editions are rare or sought after? Which are too common to be worth much? The number of titles and editions to choose from is virtually limitless. A relatively small 1100-square-foot store like Jay's has about 10,000 hardcover titles and 6,000 paperbacks, and Jay knows them all.

Unlike new book stores, used book shops have no way of keeping computerized inventorying and ordering systems. The human brain is what stores most of the basic information required to buy and sell at advantageous prices, assisted slightly by some reference materials for book dealers.

"The more you know, the better you do," says Jay, who has acquired a working knowledge of subjects as diverse as botany and theater. "You get tuned into



PETER YATES

Jay Platt

a subject and start reading about it... that's something you should always do in the business. You learn the important authorities and sources in a field. Admittedly, it's not a very deep knowledge, but a good bookseller should have some knowledge of all subjects. It's exciting getting into new subject areas. For me, now, it's photography. I've also begun to carry old photographs at the store."

Competition in the used book business can be unexpectedly fierce, but not in the way you'd expect. Dealers don't compete for customers; in fact, they often send them to each other. They compete in buying books. They vie eagerly for opportunities to acquire good book collections from estates or households that are moving. Any good auction or book sale brings out the region's major dealers and their



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scouts. The dealers arrive early and queue up in line to be among the first to go into the sale room, and they move quickly, scanning the tables of books, making rapid-fire decisions, trying to cover more tables sooner than the competition can check them out. These tension-filled book sales are easily the most exhausting and one of the most exciting parts of the business.

Most dealers in used books appear too quiet and scholarly to be very aggressive, but aggressiveness is a prerequisite for maintaining good stock. This requirement tends to give younger dealers the edge; they have come to predominate in the used book business in recent years.

The very nature of the used book business attracts a particularly independent sort of person, Jay points out. "It's very much a free market thing," he says. "You set your own buying price by negotiating, and also your selling price. And you have to go out and get the books you buy — there's no supplier." Sellers of used books cover a very broad spectrum of personalities and political convictions, and they are frequently more opinionated than the average person, Jay finds.

Though the dealers compete to the point of intrigue and sometimes talk about each other in gossipy fashion, they also cooperate. Since each store's titles in

stock differ widely from its competitors, customers frequently have to search through several stores to find what they're looking for, and dealers often distribute maps showing all the used book shops in an area. In this business, competing stores in one city create a stronger market and attract more customers from elsewhere.

Ann Arbor has become a leading center of the antiquarian book trade within the past ten years. Rivaling Chicago, it has eight used book shops, including four which are operated out of their owner's homes. Because of this concentration, a lot of out-of-town dealers come into Jay's shop to check out his stock, looking for titles they could resell for more. (Dealers offer each other a 10% discount.) Jay can combine business and pleasure on his own buying trips four or five times a year, usually covering stores in Chicago, Toronto, New York, and Washington.

"The image of a used book seller is of someone locked away in a shop, but it's actually a very social thing," Jay says. There are buying trips, antiquarian book fairs, and house calls, in addition to conversation with customers in the shop. But it all adds up to a lot of time, averaging 55 hours a week in Jay's case, and more when he makes buying trips. The shop itself is open from 11 to 6, and Thursday

and Friday until 9. If he's not there during business hours, he's out buying books.

But he doesn't begrudge the time. "It's not a 9 to 5 job," he explains. "That's why it's hard for an owner to do well in a used book shop with a paid manager. You have to love doing it and put in a lot of time and thought."

"Of course, it can be very exciting. Even reading the mail — it may have news about a collection coming up for sale, or a price quote in response to a search ad I've put in the A. B. Weekly. For instance, I just got back from Grand Rapids, where I was able to buy a collection on the Antarctic — a very rare thing. A letter about that just came out of the blue. And auctions — they're always exciting, with all the maneuvering. You try not to give away how much you're willing to spend on a particular item." [Jay's frequent poker playing helps him at auctions.]

The hours may be long, the income is modest, and the competitive aspect can be unnerving. But Jay Platt says he wouldn't trade it for the world. "I feel very lucky I'm doing something I really enjoy and living decently, too," he says. "When I started out in books, I felt I'd found my niche in life. A lot of people don't have that. If I were doing something else, this is what I'd rather be doing."

— Mary Hunt



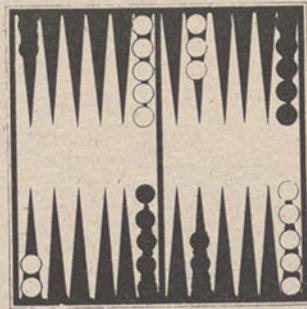
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THE MOVEABLE FEAST: Cooking for parties became a business for these professors' wives.

You rent a place, you sell good things, you make money, and you take it home." That was the way Pat Korten, one of three principals in Kerrytown's The Moveable Feast, described her preconception of owning a small catering business and gourmet food shop. Ricky Agranoff and Pat Pooley, her partners in this venture in "haute cuisine catering and tote cuisine service," nodded their assent.

Countless excellent cooks have had this same fantasy, receiving encouragement from friends appreciative of their food. When I telephoned Ricky Agranoff to ask her to share the realities of a gourmet catering operation, she invited me to meet with her, Pat Korten, and Pat Pooley at their retail shop, tucked away behind the Chinese grocery in the Kerrytown food complex. "Come see our burgeoning figures and our chipped nails," she said.

Despite Ricky's mention of "burgeoning figures," neither she nor her two partners are by any means heavy. It's not that food isn't an occupational hazard for a caterer and cook: Pat Pooley said that the three of them band together periodically and go to Weight Watchers to keep things under control.

The Moveable Feast, which will be three years old in June, initially also involved two other Ann Arbor women, Barbara Eldersveld and Alice Whiting.



Pat Pooley, Pat Korten, Ricky Agranoff

PETER YATES

(Alice went back to school for graduate training in Social Work, and Barbara is working as a legislative aide to Perry Bullard. Their shares were bought by the three remaining partners.)

Pat Korten, a trim, cosmopolitan woman of 52, has lived in Ann Arbor for eleven years. In her deep, gravelly voice, she

described herself and her partners as having been in the "middle-age woman syndrome" — women whose children were almost grown, and who had not yet settled on any craft or trade — when they came up with the idea of a catering business. She and Ricky had just come home from sabbatical leaves abroad with their hus-

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bands, both professors at the U-M. "We decided to try and really do something," Korten said. "We didn't know exactly what, but we knew other women in our situation, so we got together and brainstormed. Catering was offered as an idea. No one had any other ideas, so that's how we started." Six months after their initial discussion, The Moveable Feast was a business.

While the three partners who remain active today in The Moveable Feast had not recently been employed full-time, they were not nearly so inexperienced as Pat Korten suggested. She herself had taught at a cooking school in New York and had done some private catering with Ricky. Ricky was the first manager of Ann Arbor's Kitchen Port, which specializes in cookware for the serious cook, and she had also taught cooking. Of the three, only Pat Pooley was not primarily a cook. Although she had studied at London's famed Cordon Bleu cooking school twelve years before, in 1977 she was busy serving on the school board, working a few hours a week at the law offices of Jerry Lax and Bob Harris, and studying at Washtenaw Community College to be a paralegal aide. She returned to the Cordon Bleu for the initial six months of the business (her husband, Beverly, a law professor at the U-M, had planned a London sabbatical for that time); since then she has been the business's chief customer relations person, handling discussions of menus and other services clients might wish, such as renting linens, china, glassware, and staff to serve the food. A slim, outgoing blond woman of infectious enthusiasm, Pat Pooley said, "I have to

work at being a good cook. Pat (Korten) and Ricky have a magic touch. I'm so appreciative of their cooking skills that I can extol the things they make, which they feel are commonplace."

Is being a gifted cook — even the type of cook "with a photographic memory for tastes," as Pat Korten put it — enough to make a catering business go?

Not really. To be a licensed caterer under Public Act 269 of the State of Michigan, you need an up-to-code kitchen, which translates, in financial terms, to an investment of twenty to thirty thousand dollars. The partners checked out several locations — before settling on Kerrystown and setting up their own kitchen from scratch. "Most places wanted to sell us their business and their old equipment," she noted, adding that, in retrospect, such an arrangement might have been a good deal. Careful shopping for equipment helped keep costs down, but health codes are extremely strictly enforced in Washtenaw County, a result, perhaps, of the National Sanitation Foundation's Ann Arbor headquarters. Time and time again, the partners would hear, "That would be fine elsewhere, but not in Ann Arbor." They found that equipment with the blue "NSF" approval tag did not come cheap.

But the chief surprise for all of them was the physical stamina the work took. The five partners worked eight to ten hours a day. They planned menus with customers, calculated quantities of food and ingredients, and went to the supermarket to shop. (They say it is no cheaper to buy from wholesalers, and they do

most of their shopping at the supermarket, just like you and me.) They hauled bag after bag of groceries to their Kerrystown kitchen, and spent hour after hour on their feet, often working on only one physically tedious task in preparation for large parties. While concentrating on miniature quiches for fifty, or producing enough crepes to serve one hundred, they had to keep their "Tote Cuisine" counter stocked with its assortment of pâtés, breads, main dishes and desserts. Dishes that could be made ahead and frozen or stored without detriment to quality were prepared well in advance of service.

Acquaintances at cocktail parties would comment how much fun it must be, when they learned about their business. But back in their narrow basement kitchen, it wasn't quite what you'd call fun. Pat Pooley described the scene as a "weird ballet" as the cooks passed each other in the aisle, one woman clutching her back, another hobbling along on tired feet. "You have to get in training, like a football player," she advised.

"And know a good podiatrist," added Pat Korten with a smile. All three women wear "sensible" shoes — jogging shoes in Pat Korten's case, not exactly the footgear you'd expect to see with a tweed skirt and turtle-neck sweater.

Pricing their foods was also a difficult part of the business, and still is, because of the fluctuating and constantly rising cost of ingredients. Pat Pooley reminded the others how they had thought lasagne would be a good, low-priced casserole they could sell. "By the time we made our own pasta and boiled it," she remembered, "it became one of our most expen-

sive dishes."

Aside from the surprise of the hard physical labor, which threw them off-kilter for the first year, the business has been without major problems. Ricky Agaroff's only disappointment to date stems from the success of the items their customers have come to depend on, which include six kinds of pâtés, four types of quiches, meat pies, crepes, *boeuf bourguignon*, *feuilletées* (salmon or ham and cheese in puff pastry), sourdough French bread, croissants, tarts, tortes, moussettes, and other items added seasonally. "We must supply customer demand for these basics. I had a vision of a larger repertory than we have, but we can't get time for other things," she commented.

In their nearly three years of operation, the Moveable Feast partners have catered elegant French picnics for 450 people (featuring *salade niçoise*, chicken with water chestnuts and walnuts, tomatoes *provencal*); dinners for the University Musical Society (chicken florentine; ragout of veal with veal quenelles in a Calvados sauce); a medical school reception for 800 (desserts including walnut bars and bars of *gâteau Nancy*); and dinner for former President Gerald Ford (*salmon feuilletées*, filet of beef with *sauce fleurie*, fresh strawberry tarts).

The partners began to draw modest salaries after the first six months of operation. While they say that their earnings would not be sufficient to live on without the support of a working spouse, the business is most definitely a going concern, and its partners still love what they are doing.

— Susan Isaacs Nisbett

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THE PEACEABLE KINGDOM'S Carol Wilfong: A reluctant entrepreneur defies the odds and scores a success.

The gift shop fantasy is a compelling one for a person with a liberal arts background, no particular career, and a certain indeterminate artistic flair. What fun! — to have your own little shop, full of the wonderful things you have picked out with your own special sense of style. Buying trips to Chicago and New York, and sometimes abroad, a pleasant everyday atmosphere at the store, with visits from friends and regular customers . . . that's the dream.

"If I've heard it once, I've heard it a thousand times: 'I've always wanted a shop like this,'" says Carol Wilfong, 43, creator of The Peaceable Kingdom. The Peaceable Kingdom is a shop that carries handcrafts and Mexican folk art along with more commercial American gift items, and it has that personal stamp and friendly ambiance that would-be gift shop owners dream of.

Though the store actually does embody the dream, what's not apparent are the hardships of the four uncertain years when Carol stuck with the business before it became the success it is today.

Now six years old, The Peaceable Kingdom has only begun making money since moving downtown to 111 West Liberty (near Main) in April, 1977. The story of Carol's success with the store illustrates the pitfalls and rewards of going into business with no experience and operating mainly by instinct. "I'm not a merchandiser," she explains about herself. "Basically I buy what I like, and I don't understand the theory of 'get it out of here' — what they call 'knowing your turnover.' I know I don't know it. If I have a handmade wooden madonna I think is worth \$27.50 and it doesn't sell, I'll keep it til hell freezes over rather than mark it down."

It's clear from looking at the store that



PETER YATES

Carol Wilfong

Carol isn't following a proven gift store format that has been replicated over and over again. Though Carol has a clearly developed sense of style, she's not a follower of the latest trends in giftware or anything else. Straightforward, unpretentious, typically dressed in a turtleneck sweater, Chinese jacket, jeans, and sneakers, she is known by store regulars for her perceptive talk about people and things. She doesn't hesitate to display a \$70 cloisonne box next to a \$2 ceramic bell, and she's quite likely to steer a customer away from a \$22.50 carved Guatemalan mask to a \$7 pottery figure if she thinks it's more what is right for that customer.

Carol's previous fields of expertise were bookkeeping and training horses. Her sense of color and design and her appreciation of handcrafted things were acquired from her childhood home environ-

ment. Her father, Carlos Lopez, was a painter and U-M art professor. Her mother, Rhoda, is a ceramist. In 1973 Carol was working for accountant Dick Raab when the India Arts Shop across from Nickels Arcade was about to close its doors. Accurately sensing that Carol was bored with bookkeeping and needed a push to try something else, Dick urged her to open a shop, using the money she'd just made selling a litter of sheep dog puppies. The India Arts Shop was not for sale, it turned out, but Dick and Ellen Raab matched Carol's sheep dog money and became her new partners in a new shop, called The Peaceable Kingdom after the famous primitive paintings showing lions and lambs side by side. Then Dick "took his magical male name to a bank" to get a loan, Carol remembers. Their combined capital investment, including the loan, came to a grand total of \$5000.

Also pulling for Carol to start the business was her brother, Jon Carlos Lopez, who produces a line of ceramics in San Francisco. His decorative cream-colored horses, houses, and hanging planters were an important part of her original stock — and still are. Jon made Carol go with him to the big Los Angeles Gift Show, where, she says, "I began to buy very hesitantly — a dozen of this, a dozen of that. But the Mexican folk art I bought with my mother's help — she's a potter in California, and she had a lot of contacts in Mexico — was a mainstay. It was beautiful, not at all commercial — the kind of thing you'd want yourself."

The Peaceable Kingdom opened at a most unpromising place and time. The store was really off the beaten track at 2261 West Liberty, past Stadium, next to Dick Raab's office in a small strip of store fronts he owns. A severely limited advertising budget was the only means of informing the public of the store's exis-

tence. In 1974, shortly after The Peaceable Kingdom opened, a major recession hit.

At the beginning, everything in the store was handcrafted — mostly ethnic imports, with some pieces by American craftspeople like Ann Arbor's Charla Khanna. "You can't make it on hand-crafts" was the blunt prediction of a family friend who owned a successful gift store.

In its remote location, The Peaceable Kingdom had the charm of the unexpected — a handmade little world of charming and naive things displayed in old wood display cases, with a wood floor and a tire swing for kids to play in, all incongruously plunked down next to a pizza shop in a concrete block building. To loyal customers it was a find, and through word of mouth the store developed a small following.

Carol's son, Mark, then a toddler, had his own cubbyhole behind the counter, complete with bed and TV for watching Sesame Street. Coffee for customers was kept hot in an urn, and stools by the counter invited them to stay awhile and talk. "We had people who hung out there all day," Carol says. "When they were hanging out there too much, I'd take the stools next door to Dick's for a week or so."

Aesthetically and emotionally the store was a success. Its customers were devoted. Carol enjoyed most of all seeing how people reacted to her peaceable little kingdom. "It was — and is — a way for me to get involved with people when I'm a very private person." But financially the store missed the mark. Carol drew virtually no money out of it for herself the entire four years she was out there in the shopping strip.

"Our all-time worst day was \$1.47," she remembers with a sigh. "In 1977 we had to decide, 'Are we going to move or

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go out of business?" Dick's answer was, "I think you've really made a good try, but you should fold it up." People liked the store, but it was just barely hanging on. One regular customer, Carolyn Arcure [who owns and lives in the West Side Book Shop building at 113 West Liberty] kept saying, "Why don't you come downtown?" I thought she was crazy — I never went downtown, I thought of downtown as a lot of vacant storefronts and nothing much to offer. But one day I did go downtown. I was driving around a corner, when I saw the Millard Press. [It then occupied her present building, a three-story Italianate structure which it had painted bright blue in honor of its major printing customer, the U-M Athletic Department.] I thought, *I need that building, and they're not doing anything with it.* Next day Carolyn Arcure came by and said she had bought the Millard Press building. I got the space . . . and it scared the hell out of me."

Moving downtown meant really getting serious about the business — paying more rent, risking more, putting physical work into creating a new shop. But it didn't take long for it to become apparent that moving downtown was just what the doctor ordered. The natural market for Carol's personal mix of folk art and gifts was downtown.

Today the business has grown to the point where Carol employs five part-time salespeople and makes a living for herself doing what she likes. On a busy weekday before Christmas there are often twenty customers crammed into the 900-square-foot shop, and double that on Saturday.

Despite its success, the shop still has the relaxed, friendly atmosphere of an

old-time country store. It's a neighborhood meeting place where people stop to talk and catch up on local events.

Carol worries about one danger of success: changing and becoming too commercial. True to the gift shop owner's early prediction, she no longer sticks to her initial "handcrafts only" rule, partly because good handcrafts at reasonable prices are getting harder to find. She carries some commercial lines that many gift shops sell — like Taylor and Ng placemats and mugs, with cows and cats on them. But she still insists on stocking only what she likes. That means saying no to most of the growing number of manufacturers' reps who come around. "It's real hard to convince these people that what they have to sell is not for you," she says. "They say, 'But it sells.' And I say, 'It's not for us.'"

It's hard to overestimate the amount of personal involvement that has gone into Carol's store. That involvement creates the rewards — the pleasure she gets from seeing how customers react when they find things they really like — but it has had negative results, too. The worst times are when she's tired, she says. "You can get afraid that, somehow, you might not make it. I have to support myself and my son on this, and I feel we're tied into the ups and downs of an economy I really don't understand. It's hard being a single working parent — that's the toughest part. Working at the store makes Christmas real hard — it's such a rush. I also hate it when someone comes in and is rude and arrogant to my help." Carol pauses to reflect. "The shop has gradually become an extension of myself, I guess. I don't want to see it change." — Mary Hunt



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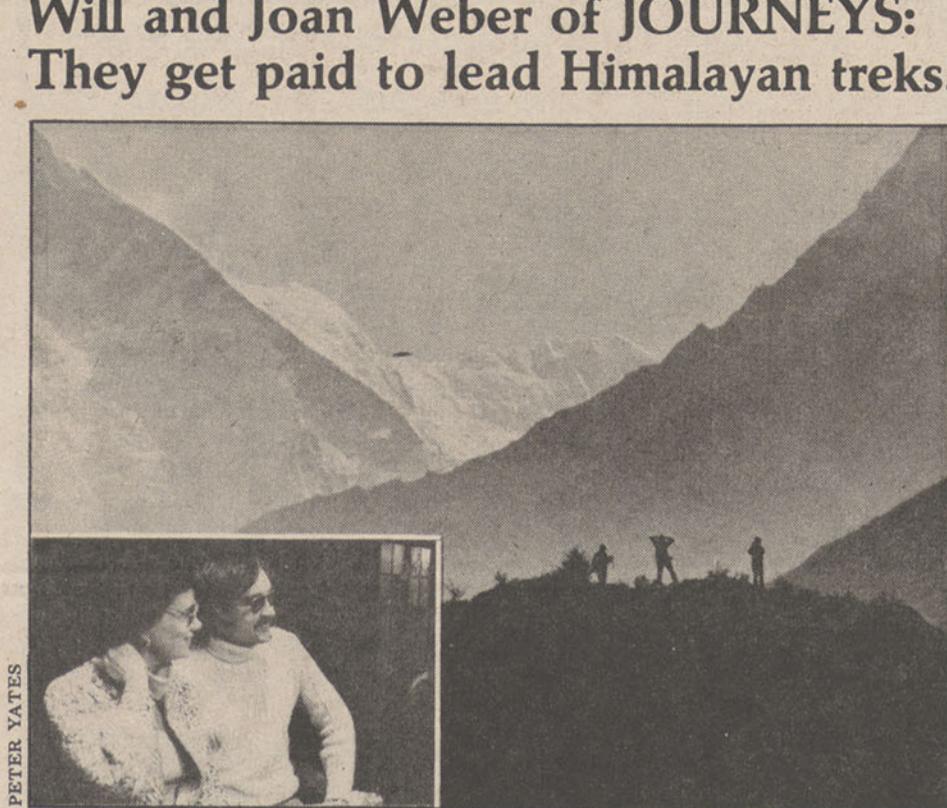
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Will and Joan Weber of JOURNEYS: They get paid to lead Himalayan treks.



PETER YATES

Of all the ways to earn a living, certainly Journeys is one of the more exotic. Will and Joan Weber of Ann Arbor lead small groups of adventurous travelers on nature and culture-oriented treks through the valleys and Himalayan mountain regions of Nepal, that tiny Asian country located north of India abutting on China and Tibet.

But can one really make a living doing

something as enjoyable as this? That was one of the many questions I posed to the Webers in a recent conversation in the living room of their co-op apartment off Platt Road.

Will Weber, a tall, strongly-built, thirty-one-year-old Wisconsin native, is currently completing a Ph.D. in the U-M School of Natural Resources. Weber spent three years, between 1972 and 1975, as a teacher and conservation officer with the Peace Corps in Nepal, living in an isolated

area about 50 miles east of Mt. Everest, and a four-day trek through the mountains to the nearest village. His twenty-nine year-old wife, Joan, a petite, dark-haired, Brooklyn-born school psychologist, taught English and worked with women's groups and children's programs in Nepal from 1974 to 1975. Both Webers speak Nepali; Will is a veteran of more than twenty Himalayan treks.

Nepal is a small country about the size of Wisconsin. Its geographic diversity is immense, ranging from subtropical jungles in the south to the soaring 29,027 foot peak of Mt. Everest in the north. (Most of the population lives in the middle hills of the Himalayas, 2,000 to 8,000 feet in altitude.)

Nepal's appeal for the Webers lies in the mystique of its mountains, in the abundance of its wildlife (including five different kinds of spotted wild cats, rhinoceros, wild boar, and crocodiles) and in the simplicity and genuine self-sufficiency of the life there. "All the clutter of life in the U.S. is gone," said Joan. "You learn that what we struggle for here is not necessarily important."

The Webers' treks give others the opportunity to experience these things first hand. Treks differ from climbs in that they do not require special equipment or training, but the groups (maximum 12 to 15 people) do travel through terrain that is often steep and rugged. They are aided by Sherpa guides and by porters who carry their equipment. They walk four to seven hours a day at a leisurely pace, stopping for three meals and sleeping in tents, local hotels, inns, homes, or monasteries. This year, less physically taxing "Asian

Odysseys" to Nepal, Sri Lanka (Ceylon), and India have been added to Journeys' itineraries.

Journeys began not so much as a business, but as a way for the Webers to return to Nepal, Joan explained. "It was really three and a half years ago that we came up with the idea. We were canoeing down the Huron River, talking about an expensive trip friends of ours planned to make to Nepal. They had half-jokingly suggested that we take them. We decided we could help them to do it for less and cover our own expenses, too."

The idea grew into a four-week, eight-person trek to Nepal in May, 1978, with the Webers and their friend, Sherpa Pemba Tschering, as guides. Two groups have gone back since then, one in May 1979, and one this past November. Approximately ten treks and odysseys are planned over the next fourteen months. The first is a trek led by Will Weber to the Arun valley of Nepal in search of Yeti (the "amiable" snowman) and snow leopard.

The Webers' costs in setting up the business were low. They point out that as tour operators (they are not a travel agency), they did not need to lay out large sums of money in advance of payment by participants. Their initial advertising was done by colored flyers made at local copy shops and posted at various locations around town. They also placed ads in student newspapers, attracting several of their first participants that way. The majority, though, were people they knew personally. What costs they had for advertising and subsequent mailings were covered from their personal savings. They

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worked then, as they do now, from their home, although they do have a Katmandu office, "Khangri Quest," headed by Sherpa guide Pemba Tschering. ("Khangri" means great white mountain in Nepali.)

Local travel agents were encouraging — Boersma even set up a window display on Nepal for them. "We were filling in a hole in the market," said Will. "We were not competing with anyone here." Tours similar to theirs emanate principally from West Coast agencies and range anywhere from \$500 to \$1300 more in price. "We are the only medium-low-priced organization with our own staff," he noted proudly.

The Webers credit their success to their intimate knowledge of the country and to the interpersonal skills of their friend Pemba, who has led expeditions in Nepal for fourteen of his twenty-five years. They carefully screen and orient their participants, talking extensively with them, suggesting readings and fitness exercises in preparation for the trip, and telling about the types of pleasant and unpleasant experiences they might have. They try to ascertain would-be participants' physical and mental health, and they reserve the right to request a doctor's certificate. Their current brochure spells out not only itineraries and expenses (about \$2300 for a 4-week trek or 2-to-3-week odyssey), but terms of payment and the limits of Journeys' liability. "Because we were so afraid of these things," Joan added, "we did a lot of things right." The extreme care they take in matters of sanitation has paid off with no sick trekkers on any trips to date. (Less careful on their own, some participants have become sick after the trek, in Katmandu.) The Webers also

know the locations of emergency airstrips and medical facilities, and they have been fortunate enough to have a medical doctor or two along on their trips.

Food was a problem the Webers hadn't anticipated the first time around: they had counted on participants eating a local diet supplemented by food items like cereals, cheese, and snack foods brought from the U.S. Most Nepalese eat two rice meals a day, but the Webers found that even the one rice meal per day they had planned on was too much; many people in the group were unable to eat it day in, day out, even when they were hungry.

The nearest they have come to disaster was on that first trip, when, upon arriving in Katmandu, Will and Joan discovered that the Nepalese friends in charge of making reservations and assembling equipment had done nothing. "I did in two days what should have taken two weeks," said Will, shaking his head in wonderment that it had been possible. No one in the tour even knew, and all went smoothly from there on out. Will said the experience gave him confidence in his ability to handle future tours and emergencies that might crop up.

Moreover, they both found that they enjoyed their roles as trek leaders. "Every night," Joan recalled, "we'd get into our tent and say, 'This is fun!'" But it took Joan a while to get over feeling that she had to provide everyone with a good time every moment of the day, every day. Now she has come to see their job as "providing the circumstances for a wonderful experience."

Both the scenery and their knowledge of the language and customs of Nepal al-

low them to do just that. Will says that few people forget riding elephants in search of rhinos and tigers, or swooping down in a small plane onto a remote mountain airstrip whose end is a sheer rock wall. On one of their treks, the group had an audience with a lama regarded by the people around Thangboche Monastery in the Everest area as "next to God."

Up until now, the benefits of their business have been other than financial: meeting and staying in close contact with the people they have trekked with; exposing them to a culture, which, as Will put it, "is entirely different and entirely happy"; getting back to Nepal themselves; and contributing to local conservation projects. Ten per cent of the total costs of a trek goes to The Earth Preservation Fund, founded by the Webers along with Journeys. During his time in the Peace Corps, Weber became disillusioned with bureaucratic-level conservation efforts. Among other things, funds from the "tithe" are used to purchase seeds, trees, and conservation education materials which trekkers distribute in the areas they visit. (In many areas of Nepal, all available trees have been cut for firewood, and reforestation is an urgent concern.)

The Webers have plowed all of their profit — that fraction of the tour cost not spent on their expenses as guides, on Pemba's salary, the trek itself, or conservation — back into Journeys to cover advertising, brochures, mailings and other administrative costs. Neither he nor Joan have taken salary to date although Journeys is a full-time job for him. He must compile mailing lists, write brochures,

plan tours, make all overseas arrangements, and check on the progress of their conservation projects. He spends a lot of time responding by personal letter to inquiries from people outside of Ann Arbor (he writes six or seven such letters a day). He meets personally with interested trekkers in the Ann Arbor area, gives slide talks on Nepal, and holds promotional meetings. The couple is still dependent for support on Joan's salary as a school psychologist at Boysville in Clinton, and Joan spends much of her after-work time on Journeys, in reality holding down close to two full-time positions.

With more tours planned (each still limited to twelve to fifteen participants), this year may represent a financial turning point for the Webers. They count in their favor their unusual knowledge of Nepal, and the fact that travel there is still a bargain, relatively speaking — something that will almost certainly change in the future. Americans, say Joan and Will, are very welcome in Nepal, where they are viewed as "the type of people who will learn Nepali, and try to live as the people do," according to Joan. (The Webers relate this to the Peace Corps' work in Nepal. Unlike other countries, where Peace Corps buildings are practically unmarked, the Katmandu office displays its name prominently.)

No matter how their business develops, Joan and Will Weber say they won't have regretted any part of their effort to share their knowledge of the cultures and natural histories of Nepal, Sri Lanka and India with other Americans. Likening their work to a trek, Will concluded, "It's a nice path and a pleasant walk." □

— Susan Isaacs Nisbett



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The Passion

How a suburban housewife and d
by writing about tempestuous heroi



Paperback romances are the hottest-selling items in the mass book market today, and Ann Arbor author Julia Grice churns out best-selling paperback romances with smoldering plots and passionate love scenes at the rate of one book a year.

"But my life is really not all that interesting," insists the tall, slender writer, wearing large glasses that she doesn't usually wear to "meet the public." She was sitting in her comfortable Pheasant Run apartment, decorated with paintings, collages and needlework she has done herself. The apartment, nestled in among the trees, has a quiet, serene atmosphere.

Dressed in a flowered blouse and tan polyester pants, the 39-year-old novelist presents an image that contrasts sharply with her sexy, tempestuous heroines. Grice is a soft-spoken, unassuming woman. But her open manner of speaking is evidence that Julia Grice has changed since she was a suburban housewife publishing her first book.

How did she get into writing scorching love stories filled with adventure and violence? Grice began writing 13 years ago when the diaper service delivered a magazine called *Your Baby* with articles written by young mothers. She submitted "He's All Yours Now," a humorously written piece about how afraid she was to bring her new baby home from the hospital. They paid her \$25 for it.

"I kept writing and writing," says the now-prolific author. "I wrote a lot of trash, but some of it started to sell." She wrote mostly confessions and articles relating to child-rearing, because she couldn't get out from under her two toddlers to do research. "The kids used to watch *Sesame Street* everyday, so that was my writing time. I would put them in front of the TV, the baby in a jumper chair, and I was at a table in the same room with my typewriter. I completely blocked them out."

"I taught myself how to write. I did a ten-year apprenticeship writing confessions," she says, no longer embarrassed by the articles. Some of her confessions were heart-renderers like, "A Woman's Body, A Woman's Soul — to Most Men, Which Comes First?" It was about a woman having a mastectomy and the repercussions it had on her relationship with her husband. She sold some ghost stories too, one about a bed haunted by the spirits of dead lovers.

In 1975 Grice wrote a book for expectant mothers and decided she needed an agent to help sell it. So she sent out letters to agents whose names she got from a list. She received two replies. One was from a rather unpleasant woman Grice didn't think she could work with. "That left only one," she remarks good naturedly, and she has been working with him ever since. He sold *What They Don't Tell You About Having a Baby* to Pocket Books, which held it for two years but never printed it.

"Then my agent suggested that I try historical romances because I have the ability to write fast-paced fiction. Writing confessions is a good training ground for writing fiction. But I didn't want to try historicals," the uncertain author recalls. "I didn't think I could do it. I've always been that way. I'm motivated by fear when I write.

"But I discovered writing romances was really fun. And I loved it. It was recreation. You don't have to try to be arty, because you are writing entertainment."

Grice's first historical romance, *Lovefire*, published in 1977, has sold a million copies. Billed as "a passion so great it needed a new word to describe it," it is the story of an Irish orphan girl, forced to live in New Orleans, who falls in love with a roguish sea captain and is captured by pirates. *Lovefire* was on the Publishers' Weekly Paperback Best Seller List for five weeks, vacillating between sixth, seventh, and eighth positions.

Her second best-seller, *Emerald Fire* (on the list for two weeks), is about a Southern belle who, wrenched from her home by a scandalous affair, flees west on a wagon train, falls in love with a mysterious mountain guide, and is abducted by Indians.

But Avon Books couldn't publish Grice's novels as fast as she could write them, so she went to Pocket Books with her third "blazing novel of pride and passion," *Daughters of the Flame*. "This is more of a family saga," states Grice, "and is still my favorite." It tells the story of a female bareback rider who becomes crippled and is forced to marry so that she can get the money to buy a circus. Eventually she is torn between the love of the circus and love for her husband.

Now Julia Grice sends her romances to Warner Books because they are willing to bring them out faster than anyone else.

Like most authors, Grice has always loved writing. A native of Battle Creek, she earned a scholarship to Albion College based on her writing. There she majored in English, though she didn't plan on becoming a novelist.



Author Julia

As in most mass market fiction, the erotic scenes in his
The scenes require just the right touch — not too
of a conflicted woman who finally yields to h
of how Julia Grice handles

"He kissed her, and the sensations were even more intense than on their last encounter. Emerald responded fully, pressing her body into his with a knowledge she had not known she possessed. She felt his hands press into her back . . . But, unlike Zelig's, his touch wasn't repulsive. She wanted more . . ." —EMERALD FIRE

Married at 22, Grice put her husband through law school while working as a social worker in Ann Arbor. Then they moved to the suburbs. When her first novel was published, Ms. Grice was a suburban housewife living in Rochester, Michigan, caring for her two sons. "I was an assistant den mother, a volunteer at the YMCA, and had a garden," she says of her life just three years ago. "But there is more to life than that. My writing helped me to become more of a person, and I outgrew my marriage," she says.

The money she received from *Lovefire* enabled her to leave her husband in February, 1978, and move to Ann Arbor with her two sons. (She describes her relationship with her ex-husband as "cordial and friendly.") In January, 1979, she remarried and moved to Hawaii, and her sons moved in with their father, who has also remarried. But her second marriage also

"Then he was upon her, . . . her on the fur rug . . . F she fought him, teeth bared. But then all of h was gone, and she lay in . . . She felt as if she were s everything, looking down humans, their forms curi ful in the filtered light of —EMERALD FIRE

failed. Depressed, Grice su crisis and missed her two riage has been annulled, a she lives alone in Ann Ar sons, now 11 and 14, abo weeks and describes them adjusted."

"I've grown a lot," says to put her personal life in "I was in a cocoon for 15 very sheltered, living a life out in suburbia. I did the the time. It was very dull

"It's typical of the w romances, too — to be li notes Grice, who has met readers. "Generally they are living a kind of prosaic live vicariously (through something that would be i themselves. They can esca

By Kathy McPh

ionate Pen

nd den mother came into her own
heroines and smoldering romance.



Julia Grice

es in historical romances are crucial if a book is to sell.
not too explicit, not too vague. The stock scene is
elds to her passion. Here are some examples
handles this delicate problem.

pon her, rolling with
ug . . . For a second
teeth bared, fingers
en all of her struggle
he lay in a half-trance.
e were somehow above
king down at the nude
orms curiously beauti-
ed light of the tepee.
IRE

"I am going to make love to you. We
have all night, and will not be disturbed."

All night. Fear pounded in her. But
in spite of herself, she felt a curling
little flicker deep within her. This was
wrong; she knew it was wrong. But
her body, her treacherous, hateful body
was going to be unfaithful to Kane,
and there was nothing she could do to
stop it." - LOVEFIRE

d, Grice suffered a writing
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ribes them as "very well

a lot," says Grice, trying
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y can escape.

"A lot of the readers are romance ad-
dicts. They buy four or five books a week.
Not all of them are addicts, though — I
wish there were more," she chuckles soft-
ly. "But they are your neighbors and
mine. A lot of college students read ro-
mances, too."

"I'm really not an intellectual the way
many people here in Ann Arbor are. And
I'm sure they look down their noses at
me," she adds somewhat defensively. She
relates an incident that occurred when she
went to the Ann Arbor Public Library to
get a library card. When the librarian
learned Grice wrote paperback romances,
she said patronizingly, "When are you go-
ing to write a good book?"

"I seethed all the way home," Grice re-
marks. "What I wanted to say to her was,
'If I wrote a good book, it would sell
5,000 copies and I wouldn't make enough
money to support myself. And I would

have to get a job in a library or whatever,
and I wouldn't be able to write. I am a
storyteller. And there is a great deal of
satisfaction in knowing you can entertain
somebody."

Grice is reluctant to talk about the
amount of money she makes. She does
explain that beginning authors get from
four to five per cent of the price of each
book. Given that the present price of pa-
perback novels is \$2.50, that translates
into about 10 to 13 cents a copy for the
writer. The publishers pay her every six
months, according to how many books
have been sold. Grice says that the per-
centage of royalties increases along with
the author's proven success. She admits
she is making twice as much in royalties
now as when she first sold her novel. "But
I'm still not in the same class as Harold
Robbins or Jacqueline Suzanne," she says,
"though I'm working on it."

Does Julia Grice think her books are
comparable to other historical romances?
"Yes — but better," she states, her confi-
dence having grown with each successful
novel. "I feel I try to make my characters
more real. My writing style is better. You
have a choice of being like John D. Mac-
Donald, who basically keeps writing the
same book over and over, or you can
grow. Right now I'm trying to teach my-
self how to write a screenplay. Sometime
I would like to write a book that becomes
a movie."

How does Grice think up her wild and
passionate plots? She decides on an inter-
esting period in history and researches it.
"But I don't do exhaustive research," she
states. She usually takes about a month
to do general survey reading. Then, as she
goes along, she researches specific scenes
as needed. She estimates she uses approxi-
mately 30 books as references for each
novel, though not all books are read en-
tirely.

For example, in her upcoming book,
Passion Star, she began by reading about
the early theater in the 1850's. The book
concerns an actress who comes up from
the slums of Glasgow and has to fight al-
coholism, among other problems. "Once
I start researching, the characters just
grow, though they are purely out of my
imagination."

When asked if she thinks that histori-
cal romances stereotype women as sub-
missive, helpless sex-objects, Grice agrees.
"Yes, but it is the convention of the gen-
re. If you write a woman who doesn't fit,
then your books won't sell. You have to
follow the formula. Basically the formula
is a lusty, beautiful, passionate, tempe-
tuos woman who is looking for love."

Grice stresses that she is trying to "get
away from this little woman who is but-
tressed around by her gonads. I want my
women characters to be more in charge of
their own lives. I'm really impatient with
books where the lady in distress has to
call in some man to help her. And then
she stands around wringing her hands
while he does all the work. I got tired of
that. Gradually my heroines have gotten
stronger," she says. For example, the
women in her books used to get raped
(another convention of the genre), but
they are now fighting off the rapist.

"Rape is one of the things they put in
those romances. Why? I don't know," she
says pensively. "I think they put it in be-
cause they think the readers expect it.
There has got to be some reason for it.
Women are buying that."

Occasionally people (mostly men)
come up to Julia Grice and ask her if she
really lives the kind of life portrayed in
her books. She lets out a quick, throaty
laugh and answers, "Do I look like I do?
I'm really just an ordinary person. No, I
have never been captured by pirates."
She works from "a very vivid imagina-
tion" and her unconscious rather than
from experience.

"Ten years ago I never thought I
would be where I am right now," she
states, still in slight awe of her success.
The productive author says she is experi-
encing a greater flow of creativity now.
She usually writes from four to six hours
every day, turning out about eleven pages
of original copy. She is trying to keep up
her present pace of publishing one book a
year. 1980 will be an exception, however,
with two books coming out: *Wild Roses*
in January and *Passion Star* in June. "My
agent says this is a big break for me,"
Grice tells us excitedly. "Two books pub-
lished in the same year is good because it
keeps you in the eyes of the readers."

The writers she admires most are Pearl
Buck and Ray Bradbury. Someday she
"would like to have one big best-seller, a
hardback, like Harold Robbins writes."
But she is not rushing it. "I feel I'm just
getting started in my career. I don't want
to stay in one spot writing romances. I
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you'll be left behind."

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is my identity. I'll keep writing as long as
it's good. Or maybe I won't," she adds
with a smile. □

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Northside Goes to Chicago

What happens when 41 students from Northside Elementary School spend two days in the Windy City? Peter Yates went along to find out.



By PETER YATES



At 9:15 a.m. on Thursday, December 6, 41 excited elementary school children from Ann Arbor's Northside School climbed aboard Amtrak's "The Wolverine," which was to take them to Chicago for a two day visit. Joyce Casale, who teaches 3rd and 4th graders at Northside, and Janet Kahan, who has 5th and 6th graders, were combining their classes for the trip. Joyce's and Janet's classrooms are, in the Ann Arbor school system's terminology, "informal"—less structured than the regular classes, although they share the same general curriculum. In previous years, the informal classes at Northside had been on overnight camping trips and on a one-day trip to Toronto, but this was to be the first

overnight trip to a city. Six other adults accompanied Joyce and Janet, four parents, a student teacher and a teacher's aide.

Janet and Joyce had suggested the trip at a parents' meeting at Northside in September. They felt that visiting Chicago's museums would be a valuable educational experience for the children. When the trip was approved, parents, teachers, and children set about raising the \$2,500 it was estimated the trip would cost. More than half the needed money was raised through donations from parents and friends, including a gift of \$750 from a friend of Janet's husband Dik, who had no connection with the school but felt that the trip would benefit the children. The rest of the money was raised in a variety of ways. Baked goods, potato chips and

"Northside Super Kid" T-shirts were sold. Janet and Joyce showed movies at the school on Saturday afternoons. Joyce charged \$1 for "King Kong Meets Godzilla," while Janet's movie, "Snoopy Come Home," cost only 75¢. Parents helped out by selling donuts, coffee, and hot cider to U-M football crowds. By November 21, enough money had been raised to pay the travel agent for the rooms at the Conrad Hilton Hotel and for the train ride to Chicago and back. With the expectation that enough money would eventually be raised, the two teachers had spent a weekend in Chicago at the beginning of November. They had visited restaurants and museums to figure out the best way of maneuvering 41 school children around Chicago. In the weeks before the trip, Joyce and Janet acquainted the children with places they could visit in Chicago, and when the children had decided which places they would visit, they were given some background on what they would be seeing.

Joyce and Janet got the idea for the trip from a friend of theirs, Rick Hall, an adventurous teacher at Burns Park Elementary School, who had twice taken his classes on overnight trips to Chicago, and once to Toronto.

The Northsiders were all in the last car of the train going to Chicago. As it slowed down outside Jackson, a girl called from the back of the train, "Are we in Chicago?" Told that Chicago was still more than four hours away, she went back to singing the Peaches and Herb song "Re-united" with a group in the rear of the compartment.

Whiling away the time, some children played board games such as chess, checkers, Othello, and Mastermind, while others played more modern electronic versions of football and basketball. Others drew on large sheets of newsprint with magic markers. The girls favored houses, flowers, and butterflies, while the boys tended to draw rockets, cars, and space ships.

Third grader Danyal Reeves, his eyes widening from the wonder of the trip, looked up from his game of chess and said, "I couldn't believe it this morning. I almost passed out. I couldn't believe I was going to Chicago."

Across the aisle from Danyal were Erica, a tiny third grader, and her best friend Jené, a much larger girl. They would stay close to each other throughout the trip. Though good friends, they fight a lot, explained Erica, "because I'm a crab, a Scorpio."

At Chicago's Union Station the children were divided into groups, five or six to each adult. Janet and parent Charlotte Foster went directly to the *Chicago Tribune* with their charges for a prearranged tour of the newspaper, while the others took cabs to the Conrad Hilton to drop off the luggage before proceeding to the Aquarium, the Planetarium, or the Art Institute.

At the *Tribune* a self-assured man in his early twenties showed a film which traced how each issue of the *Tribune* is made, from company-owned lumber mills in Quebec, through the news-gathering operations around the world, to the editorial desks and printing presses in Chicago. After showing the film, the tour guide answered questions with aplomb and ex-

pounded on what a great and magnificent newspaper the *Chicago Tribune* was. It's so wonderful, he said, that "the T.V. station that we own has the call letters W.G.N. for World's Greatest Newspaper." He then led the group down a corridor that looked onto the city room through one-way glass. It was a fairly slow time of day in the vast city room, the guide said, in explanation of the desultory behavior of its denizens, who were not assembling the next day's news in the hectic manner people are accustomed to seeing on T.V. shows such as "Lou Grant." As the first edition deadline approached, the guide explained, the tempo of the city room would pick up.

Squeezing into an elevator, two *Tribune* executives asked sixth grader Gerald McKinney, whose main interest is sports, how he was enjoying the visit. "It's alright" responded a very deadpan Gerald, who was missing basketball practice in Ann Arbor. He was visiting the *Tribune* because he doesn't like museums, and all the other options sounded like museums to him.

Along another corridor, this time with two-way glass, the group stopped to look in on the composing room. Seeing the children's faces pressed against the glass, one man stopped laying out the next day's paper, picked up two cups and poured water from one cup into the other. Smiling, he turned the cups upside down. Nothing came out. The children gasped. "Can they see us?" somebody asked, remembering that they could not be seen when they viewed the city room. Teacher Janet Kahan assured everyone that yes, they could be seen, and the man with the cups did the trick again. As the tour guide led the group away, the composing-room magician held the cup out, revealing a paper napkin stuffed inside to soak up the water.

Marlene, one of the parents, tall and thin with designer jeans and a New York accent, stood outside the Conrad Hilton trying to find a cab to take her group to the Planetarium, one of Chicago's prime tourist attractions. Though the Planetarium is only a mile from the hotel, the first cab driver Marlene approached said, sorry, he didn't know where it was. The next cabbie Marlene asked said the same thing. In fact, five cab drivers told Marlene they didn't know where the Planetarium was. A Chicago cab driver does not want to hear the word "Planetarium" when he pulls up outside the Conrad Hilton. The word he wants to hear is "O'Hare." Marlene persisted, and the sixth cab driver took her, her son Ethan, and four Northside students to the Planetarium.

While Marlene was at the Planetarium, Janet and Charlotte and their kids were finishing up the *Tribune* tour by watching the newspaper being printed. Leaving the *Tribune*, Charlotte, a calm, low-keyed woman, crammed the six kids in her group into the back of a taxi for the ride to the hotel. Charlotte rode up front with the driver, who complained that the cab was overcrowded, complained about a truck on the boulevard (apparently not allowed—"that's a commercial plate, can't you see?"), and complained most bitterly when Charlotte interpreted his jabs at Jane Byrne to mean that he disliked the mayor. "I never said I didn't

like Mayor Byrne," whined the cabbie. "You sound like a newspaper reporter." Apparently some of the World's Greatest Newspaper had rubbed off on Charlotte.

The Conrad Hilton hotel is a plush, big-city hotel on the grand scale. Alighting from Charlotte's cab, fifth grader Azmina, an East Indian refugee from Idi Amin's Uganda, who has been a student at Northside since kindergarten, looked wonderingly at the great building in which she was to stay. Azmina, a friendly, outgoing girl, walked up to the building doorman and asked him if anyone famous had ever stayed there.

"Did you ever hear of a big man from Texas?" the doorman asked. When someone hesitantly suggested John Wayne, the doorman said that he meant John Connally, who was at that moment staying at the hotel.

"Can I get his autograph?" Azmina wanted to know. With no discernible twinkle in his eye, the doorman asked Azmina if she was a Republican. "Yes, OK, I'm a Republican," replied Azmina, who turned to Charlotte as they entered the hotel and whispered, "What's a Republican?"

By 5 o'clock everyone had returned to the hotel and had their rooms assigned. When teacher Joyce Casale had first arrived at the hotel from Union Station, she had discovered that the Northside group's rooms were scattered all over the 6th floor. Joyce had insisted to the hotel management that the rooms be close together, and the hotel had rearranged the rooms to satisfy her. Third grader Moneka Hewlett asked Joyce if she could telephone her parents in Ann Arbor to let them know that all was well. Joyce, realizing that if one called home, 40 others might want to, said no, so Moneka, lying on her bed, decided to write a letter. "Dear Mom and Dad and Muffin and Damon, How is everybody?" Moneka began her letter. Muffin is a beagle of unimpeachable pedigree; Damon is Moneka's four-year-old brother. Moneka finished the letter but could not find a stamp, so she carried the letter back to Ann Arbor with her.

On the evening of their first day in Chicago, the Northside children had the choice of going to the top of the world's tallest building (the Sears Tower) or riding in the world's fastest elevator to the 94th floor of the John Hancock Building. Most chose the Hancock Building be-



Here we are waiting for the train

Erica and Jané have drinks in their room (1a-1a1)



Riding the train was lots of fun



This man at the Tribune showed us a trick

cause, they were told, it was in a more interesting neighborhood and had a better view of night-time Chicago. Joyce's and Marlene's groups had decided to eat pizza at Papa Milano's before ascending the Hancock Building, but Joyce and Janet's scouting trip for inexpensive and informal restaurants had failed to disclose that Papa Milano's was one of the most popular restaurants in the neighborhood.

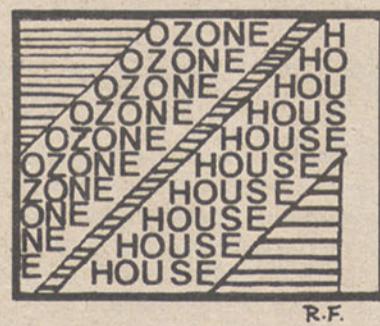
"You always have a half-hour wait here," said one of the several people waiting in line to eat. He suggested the

group try Gino's, around the corner, which also served pizza and had plenty of room for everybody.

After a 45-minute wait at Gino's — "It's impossible, it cannot be rushed," said the waitress — Gino's deep-dish pizza with sausage appeared. Colleen Mallory, a blonde third grader with pig tails sticking out on either side of her head, scraped the sausage off her pizza. Colleen is not a vegetarian, just not a sausage eater. Joyce doggybagged the uneaten portions. As the group left Gino's, the Peaches and

Herb song "Reunited," which several children had been singing on the train, was playing on the jukebox and five of the children hunched around the jukebox and sang hesitantly along. When no other restaurant patrons complained and some even offered encouragement, the kids sang more confidently, and one or two even snapped their fingers.

Their ears popping, the Northsiders rode to the 94th floor of the John Hancock building in 45 seconds. They were greeted by a spectacular view of Chicago



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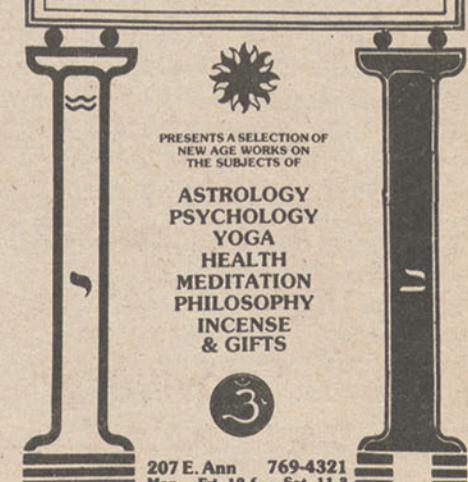
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at night. The air was so clear that the children were able to watch airplanes landing at O'Hare airport some 15 miles away. For many it was the most exciting part of the trip.

When the group arrived back at the Conrad Hilton shortly after 9 o'clock, they discovered a surrealistic sight. Chauffeur-driven limousines were double-parked the length of the block. Bejeweled, fur-coated matrons, with their patrician husbands, were being escorted from the hotel. A number of them were carrying odd gold pots containing curved, multi-colored, three-feet-long, star-studded sticks. Moneka and Azmina gazed open-mouthed as one of these gaudy ornaments was carried by, whereupon its furred bearer stopped and gave it to Moneka. It turned out that John Connally had been honored as Chicago's Man of the Year at a dinner given by an exclusive area club. The gold pots, the table centerpieces at the dinner, had been given away to the dinner guests whose birthdays were closest to Connally's. Moneka's strange pot became the most treasured memento of her trip to Chicago. She decided that the ornament represented the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

Getting the kids into bed was difficult. They were excited and full of energy. They would peek out of their doors, and, if no grown-ups could be seen, they would run up and down the corridors on the sixth floor wing where everybody from Northside was located. Rania, Christie and Jolie, all fifth graders, were sharing a room with their friend Emily, a sixth grader. Jolie and her friends, looking through the peephole in their room, later explained they saw a man in a leather jacket and hat with a white scarf around his neck standing right outside their room looking at the door. Scared, they locked themselves in the tiny bathroom for the night, taking the blankets off their beds for warmth. Rania and Emily were in the bathtub, Christie under the sink, while Jolie lay on the floor with her feet on the toilet. Jolie slept a little, the others not a wink, they said.

To save money, Friday morning the kids had breakfast in their rooms. They ate their individual packets of cereal, which could, if opened in a certain way, hold a portion of the milk that had been sitting all night in the ice-filled bathtub

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in the room of teacher's aide Matt Edinburgh. Everyone then walked under a dark sky the half mile or so to the Field Museum of Natural History. They were admitted at a side entrance by a museum guard who tut-tutted at the muddy state of everyone's shoes. Student teacher Lance Robinson, a helpful and enthusiastic young man, was singled out as the person with the dirtiest shoes and sent back to the entrance to wipe them off again.

The hit of the Field Museum was an enormous gorilla by the name of Bushman, who all the children knew about from one of the postcards that Joyce and Janet had brought back from their earlier visit. "I don't know why they have to kill the animals and then stuff them," complained fourth grader Lauren McDonald, a freckle-faced girl who gets kidded for her Rod Stewart haircut. She was assured that nowadays the museum waits for the animals to die a natural death before stuffing them. That this was not always so was shown by the card explaining the demise of a Giant Panda that was standing, stuffed and surrounded by bamboo stalks, in one of the museum's innumerable glass cases. The card stated

that this particular animal was the first of its kind ever killed by a white man, having been bagged by Theodore and Kermit Roosevelt on a trip they made to China in the early years of the century.

The most startling information that the children culled from the museum was the knowledge that the mummies had their brains removed through their nostrils. This fact so gripped the imaginations of Joyce's group that, as the kids returned from the mummies and passed Janet's group on its way to see them, they had to tell their peers right away, evoking cries of "Oh, gross!"

After stopping in the lunch room to eat the cheese and peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwiches prepared in the hotel the previous evening, the children formed into new groups, some going to the Planetarium, most visiting the Shedd Aquarium.

The Aquarium was full of fish. It was also full of kids, because on Friday admission to the Aquarium is free. It was the last stop on the Northsiders' visit to Chicago, and those who had any money left spent it adding to their collection of souvenirs. Azmina had to borrow 40¢ be-

fore she could afford a cigar-smoking frog made entirely of shells. The best souvenir shop had been at the Field Museum, where a variety of natural objects and artifacts had been very reasonably priced. Exotic-looking seashells were a favorite at 25¢. At the Sears Tower and the Hancock Building, the kids had mostly bought souvenir sausage-shaped dogs and oversized pencils with "CHICAGO" emblazoned on them. Fourth grader Billy Kramer bought a model of the Sears Tower in a clear plastic case, but it had broken before Billy even got on the train for home.

The highlight of the Aquarium visit came when a woman in a black swimsuit with an air hose and a bucket of fish, swam around the giant central tank, feeding the fish while giving a running commentary through a microphone in her helmet. Fortunately by this time, Janet had been able to calm Jené, who, never having been in an Aquarium before, on first seeing the sharks, thought that they would swim right out of the tank and eat her. When the woman in the tank ran out of fish, Jené and the rest of the Northside group returned to the hotel to pick up the luggage.

The group arrived at Union Station with more than an hour to spare before the train left for Ann Arbor. Amtrak had been warned that the children would be buying their suppers in "The Twilight Limited's" snack bar, but 41 kids buying hamburgers, Cokes, and Crackerjacks put a severe strain on the snack bar's resources and on the patience of the other passengers, many of them looking for a good belt after a hard day in the Windy City.

The trip to Chicago had been an eye-opening experience for the children. Gerald, in his usual way, would not own up to having enjoyed it very much, but most of the children were quite overwhelmed and would talk about little else for the next few days. Summing up her trip, Lauren McDonald looked up from her game of "Connect Four" (an advanced tic-tac-toe) and said, "When we get back to Ann Arbor, I'll never believe that we were just in Chicago."

When the train arrived in Ann Arbor, parents and children greeted each other as though they had been separated for weeks, and Moneka's beagle Muffin almost went berserk. The children had been away from home for 38 hours. □

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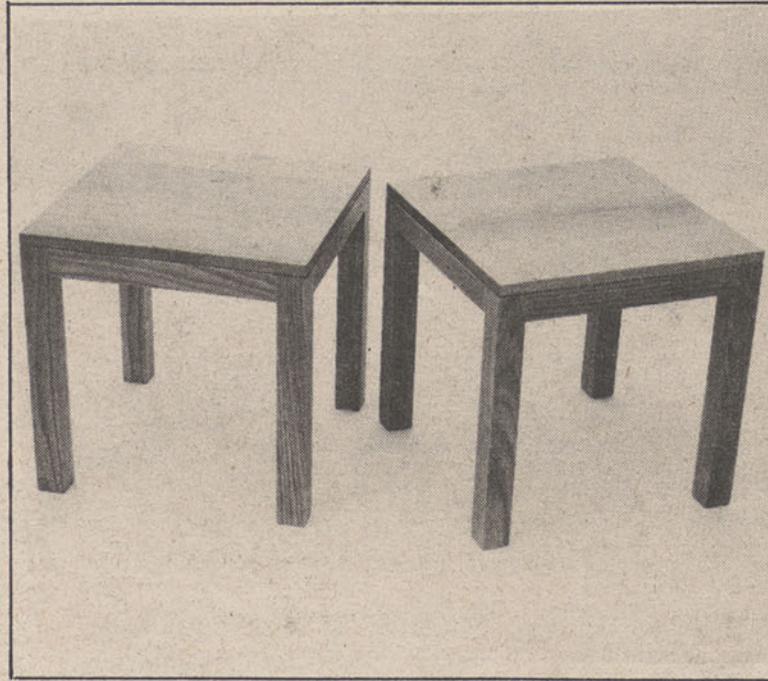
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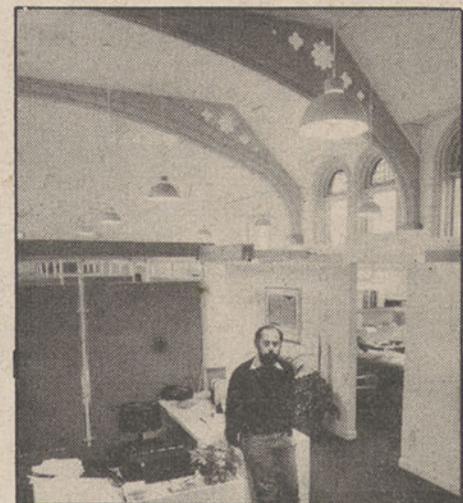
CHANGES

Selected reports on major changes in retail businesses and noteworthy buildings by Mary Hunt.

Historic building renovation takes money and taste; Harris Hall's owners have both.

The renovation of Harris Hall at State and Huron by its new owners, the advertising agency of Buckheim and Rowland, is nearing completion. On the outside of the 1886 former Episcopal student center the dirt has been cleaned from the exterior brick, large street trees have been planted, and the sidewalk extension has been paved with brick. Inside, what decades of makeshift remodeling had turned into a warren of jerry-built offices with flimsy partitions and drop ceilings has all been removed. Upstairs, the one-time meeting hall is now the home of the 19-employee ad agency. The offices of principals Dick Buckheim (the firm's creative force) and Dick Rowland (its marketing expert) are on the old auditorium's raised stage. The 3,900-square-foot, gable-roofed central area has been divided into individual office areas by an ingenious flexible partitioning system of Buckheim's design, equal in appearance to expensive commercial open-office systems, but made at much less cost, entirely of ordinary materials like pipes, homasote board, and fabric, that are available locally.

working within the framework of available materials and existing forces. For instance, architect Mike FeFevre of Colvin-Robinson decided to retain the existing steam heating system and radiators along the outside walls and make a



Dick Buckheim in his new offices.

simple radiator modification, so that the radiant heat from the radiators would go only up, and not out, which would overheat the little office space right next to them. When the hot air rises, ceiling fans push it back down to the center of the area. Extensive demolition and construction of walls was avoided by using the original floor plan as the basic units of space.

A sophisticated and unobtrusive color scheme (white walls with accents of two shades of putty gray-tan) performs the dual feat of creating a spacious, airy feeling and still emphasizing the interesting architectural details like the woodwork and the auditorium's carved arches and occasional gargoyles. Other original architectural adornments include stained-glass crescent windows and some imitation marble fireplaces that actually function.



The renovation's byword has been economy — that misunderstood term which, when applied to design, doesn't mean being cheap, but rather signifies

Oriental art for the collector.

The Lotus Gallery has already moved into the first floor of Harris Hall. Gallery owners Les Werbel and Dan Shutt have assembled an eclectic mix of Oriental art (jewelry, ceramics, and prints from China, Japan, Korea, India, and Southeast Asia), lithographs by contemporary masters like Georg Grosz and Marc Chagall, and some antique American and English silver and small furniture pieces. Everything is guaranteed for authenticity.

Werbel is director of chemistry contracts for Warner Lambert/Parke Davis. For him the gallery is an avocation. He is an avid collector of fine graphics and Oriental art who has dealt in Asian art for the past ten years. This venture is his first public gallery not by appointment only. Shutt, the full-time gallery manager, is presently a U-M grad student in art his-

tory, specializing in Asian art, Chinese ceramics from the 12th and 13th centuries in particular.

"Quality is the watchword" at the Lotus Gallery, as Shutt told us, and quality doesn't come cheap, but the gallery does have pieces beginning at \$75 — jade pendants, for instance, or Chinese snuff bottles, or certain lithographs, or carved Japanese ivory figures. The gallery is geared to serving the serious collector. Not all serious collectors are "necessarily well-heeled," Shutt pointed out. "I've been known to eat beans for months to buy a piece of Chinese porcelain. I'm familiar with the collector's feelings and needs. At the gallery we will help people upgrade their collections; we'll locate things for people, sometimes acting only as agents. We're paid for our expertise and judgment."

Assorted notes.

At State and William, Mr. Tony's Submarines is gone, to be replaced in mid-January by The Orient Express, a take-out restaurant with inexpensive specialties like egg rolls, skewered sweet-sour pork and teriyaki beef, and fried rice (vegetarian and with meat). Proprietor-chef Lok Lau, an energetic young Chinese from Singapore, envisions it as a "Chinese McDonald's." Booths will seat about 40 people. As a manager-owner with a vested interest in the place, Lok Lau believes he'll be more effective in dealing with the loiterers who have created problems at the State and William corner recently.

Real Seafood in Kerrystown is now Monahan's Seafood Market, owned and operated by Mike Monahan and Paul Saginaw, both formerly of the Real Seafood restaurant. Saginaw managed Maude's, too. The pair intends to compete aggressively with supermarket fresh fish departments by offering more varieties and fresher fish. (Really fresh fish, they say, is firm, deep of color, and not watery.) They have a direct line of supply to Foley's, a famed Boston fish dealer, without a warehousing stop in Detroit. And they stock ethnic favorites (eel, live blue crab, smoked fish — "the biggest selection in town," Monahan says) and pan fish like crappie and white bass. They also plan a Saturday-morning oyster bar (oyster and cherrystones on the halfshell for 35 or 40 cents, and homemade fish chowder).

Two of Ann Arbor's more distinctive shops have closed their doors. Bathsheba, the Kerrystown bath shop selling not only high-fashion bathroom accessories but dramatic Italian tubs, washbowls, and other fixtures, closed in December. Its owner, Kitchenport, gave Bathsheba three years to show a profit. It didn't.

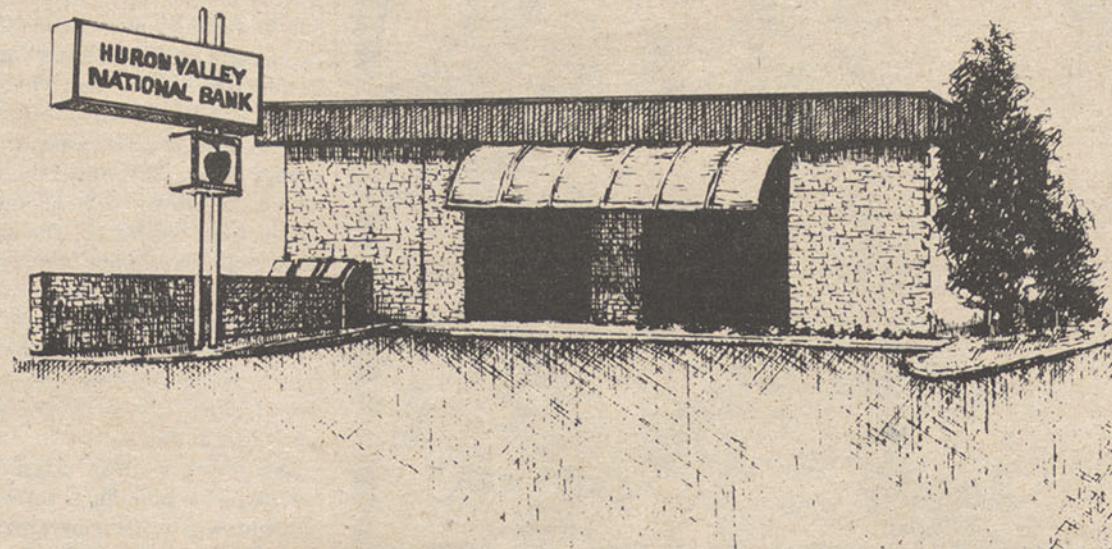
Ragtop vintage clothing, 121 W. Washington, a stylish resale shop owned and run by Connie Crump and Barb Slocum, closed in late November, but the partners may continue the business on a wholesale and weekend basis. Saguaro Plants has moved into Ragtop's space, which is connected in the rear to Saguaro's main store area around the corner on Ashley. Owner Richard Tuttle reports that his "interior landscaping" and plant maintenance business is doing well, with many contracts with restaurants and offices. Now he has more room for large, natural-light plants; live birds will add to the jungle-like effect.

Lovejoy-Tiffany & Associates, a travel agency, has expanded from its 450 S. Main quarters into a large and newly-renovated brick house at 221 N. Ashley.

Across the street, the one-time gas station at Miller and Ashley (most recently the home of Consumer Beef & Cheese) has been dramatically remodeled, outside and in, to become Timms Place, hair stylists and skin care specialists.

Another new salon, also vastly altered in interior appearance, is Metamorphosis Hair and Skin Care Studio, owned and operated by Darlene Watson at 121 East Liberty, where a wig shop used to be. Skin care and cosmetics has developed into a big business for hair stylists within the past five years, we're told. Big customers are career women who want to put their best feet forward.

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CHANGES/continued

Dreamland Bazaar begins a new era for 226 W. Liberty; café and offices to come.

Rebazar Dreamland Bazaar — you may have seen signs advertising it on poles and kiosks around town. It consists of a mix of antique furniture, brass reproductions, handcrafts, jewelry, and what-have-you, which individual entrepreneurs have installed in small sales spaces in the former garage area of 226 West Liberty at First. 226 is the brown tile block building across from Apperose. The bazaar is currently open weekends (Friday from 6 to 9, Saturdays from 10 to 6, and Sundays from 11 to 6). One recent Saturday it was filled with browsers who seemed to welcome the eye-catching miscellany of objects for sale as a relief from a dreary early winter day.

Mastermind of the bazaar and new owner of the building is Dave Rosenberg, 28, who was in the front area presiding over a coffee urn and a big box of croissants, for sale at 50 cents each. A bearded, sandy-haired, trim young man, Rosenberg was wearing a casual plaid shirt.

Without hesitation he described his plans for the building, of which the bazaar is only the tip of the iceberg, and outlined his recent careers. Rosenberg is a developer, working in partnership with architect-builder Tom Martone in their firm, called Tactile Dynamics. 226 West Liberty is their second project; the Broadway Condominiums at Broadway and Jones Drive was their first.

In the West Liberty building, Rosenberg intends to install his and Martone's offices upstairs and turn the north end of the building into a café. The owner of a successful Dearborn bar has already purchased the liquor license for it from an existing Ann Arbor establishment (not downtown). The café would be geared to a fairly mature crowd (from 27 to 50, Rosenberg said) and would concentrate on a café atmosphere, not food. The bazaar and café would attract customers for each other.

If the bazaar proves successful, its individual merchants can lease space on a more permanent basis (presently it's rented at rates of \$20 and up per weekend) and make their own carpentry improvements.

Rosenberg became a developer, he said, to shelter the fabulous income he had been making selling ultrasound equipment (a non-radioactive scanner which measures large organs and fetal growth).



226 W. Liberty

to hospitals. With a degree in radiologic sciences from the University of Arizona (where he also taught), Rosenberg started selling radiologic ultrasound equipment for Unirad Corporation and then for Johnson & Johnson, which transferred him to the Detroit area. During this time, Rosenberg says, "I discovered my own inner core." He also discovered that he was a fantastic salesman. Between January 1 and May 1, 1978, he had sold \$850,000 worth of ultrasound equipment, a previously unheard-of amount, and then quit to form his own medical supply company, called Aptek, using the sales contacts he had already built up.

"I work on the premise that I have to keep from getting bored, tired, and lazy," he said. A bachelor, he now runs Aptek and Tactile Dynamics and hangs out at the bazaar on weekends. Good management and his right-hand woman, Cindy Pogue, enable him to keep his fingers in all these pies. "If you learn to be a good manager, there are a lot of people out there looking for direction," he believes.

So where does the word "Rebazar" come from? That question revealed what Rosenberg believes is the secret to his success. Rebazar is an "ancient spiritual adept" (or expert) from Tibet, a sort of patron saint of craftspeople for Eckists. Eckists are believers of Eckankar, a non-religious philosophy of life which claims to be "one way," not "the way." And Rosenberg is an Eckist.

"Eckankar teaches you to control your physical life by tapping into the spiritual life force or Eck-current," he explained. "It teaches that we are the total creators of our existence. We can do what we want — we are not controlled by good or bad forces. You learn to untunnel your vision, to see existence objectively. The creative energy you take on is a lot more than you ever imagined possible."

Briarwood changes.

At Briarwood, a CVS discount drugstore will move in near Penney's in mid-January. CVS stands for Consumer Value Stores. The 5,000-square-foot store, carrying a standard drugstore mix of toiletries, cosmetics, non-prescription health aids, school supplies, and household products, will fill a long-standing need in the Briarwood merchandising mix, according to mall manager John Wagner. "Right now there's no place to buy a Kleenex if you have a runny nose," he said.

Lord and Taylor, the top-of-the-line New York department store, is expected to move into its new 115,000-square-foot space by fall. The original Briarwood site plan had included plans for such a fourth anchor store to be built on the mall's south side. 12 to 15 new retail spaces will line the corridor linking Lord & Taylor with the rest of the mall; leasing agents of the Taubman Company, which owns Briarwood, are seeking higher-price, fashion-oriented stores to fit in with the Lord and Taylor image.

A new idea for one-person offices.

A fertile imagination is more useful to a real estate property manager than one might think. Take Peter Allen, 34, the tweedily dapper manager and partner in many of attorney Bill Conlin's real estate interests, including the City Center Building, Plymouth Mall, and, most recently, the Wolverine Building at Fourth and Washington, now known as Washington Square. Ideas fairly fizz from Allen's curly brown hair: roof-top gardens, basement saunas, rehab-it-yourself condominium apartments, hanging plants to give a long hallway a classy look.



PETER YATES

Sheryl White of Visual Action

Faced with the large (2,500 square feet), mostly unimproved basement of Washington Square, Allen has devised The Officentre, described in promotional materials as "a new concept in furnished, staffed offices on a month to month basis." What this means is that, for example, if you're a new business or a manufacturer's rep who needs a minimal office downtown in which to work occasionally and for meeting customers or clients, you could immediately move into your own space — small (about 60 square feet for \$225/mo., 100 square feet for \$325/mo.) but stylish (peach-color perimeter walls, earth-tone upholstered chairs, and plenty of plants for accents). Each of the seven

Officentre spaces is formed by flexible formica partitions six or seven feet high and furnished with a telephone, desk, two chairs, a lockable lateral file, a shelf, and (if you opt for the deluxe model) an extra chair, a worktable, and a round conference table. You could move in tomorrow for start-up costs of about \$550. If your business grows, or folds, or moves, you aren't locked into a long-term lease.

Opposite the Officentre entrance, Judy Yaklin, a young, smartly-dressed employee of Executive Secretarial Services (ESS), is ensconced behind a large desk. "We are attempting to facilitate small offices by providing a receptionist sort of thing out here in front," she told us. Yaklin explained that ESS's facilitating meant she would greet and screen people, take in typing (billed at \$15 an hour in quarter-hour increments), answer the phone (using the tenant company's name) for an additional monthly fee of \$40, make coffee, and arrange for other jobs like mailings and bookkeeping to be performed by the ESS staff. ESS could also handle overflow and short-term secretarial work generated by other Washington Square tenants — for instance, "a mass mailing that might take two days of their gal's time," in Yaklin's words.

Allen expects The Officentre to attract start-up businesses, non-profit groups that are only staffed part-time, and manufacturers' reps who are on the road a lot. He hopes The Officentre will prove to fill a real but as yet unmet need; if so, he'll set up another one in his building at 2500 Packard near the Georgetown Mall.

If the Washington Square Officentre works out, Allen's ingenuity will have earned him \$8.50 a square foot for the problem basement space — "That's darn good for the lower level," he admits — and will have provided an in-house incubator for new businesses which, once established, could well move up into Washington Square's upper floors.

Oddfellows' Hall to become gourmet take-out, cafe.

The Moveable Feast, the gourmet take-out shop and catering business now in Kerytown, is purchasing the Oddfellows' hall on West Liberty near Second. More accurately, the business's three partners (Ricky Agranoff, Pat Korten, and Pat Pooley) and their husbands have purchased the mansard-roofed, century-old house by mortgaging themselves to the hilt. They hope to move in by March.

The owners-cooks need a bigger kitchen and more space to expand on some of their catering and food ideas. Partner Pooley is brimming over with enthusiasm about the project: "Our idea now is to keep the entire first floor and rent the lovely large room to the left (currently the Oddfellows' meeting hall) for weddings and parties, and perhaps serve lunches and morning coffee and tea. The smaller room to the right would be sort of a gourmet party store — maybe with wine, cheese, some really nice oils and jams — things we're not allowed to sell in Kerytown because other tenants are already selling them.

"Our ideas are very fluid right now," she continued. Maybe we'll call the place 'Soupçon' — a little bit — and have homemade soup, bread, and salad, with our regular cakes available. Maybe we'll have a dinner club, featuring a really elegant meal once or twice a month, with an entree like filet of duck Madagascar (with green peppercorns), served with a classic puree of turnips and potatoes, and tomatoes *provençal*, with perhaps quenelles of pike with *sauce Nantua* for a first course, and a chocolate mousse Grand Marnier surprise for dessert. . . . But so much depends on the building's boiler. It would cost \$6000 or more if it has to be replaced."

Pooley says that, unlike many Ann Arbor restaurants, The Moveable Feast will emphasize food, not decor. "The house is in good shape, and we think the rooms themselves are so lovely, that a minimal amount of decoration is necessary."

The Moveable Feast will continue to sell in Kerytown until a clientele is built up at the new location.



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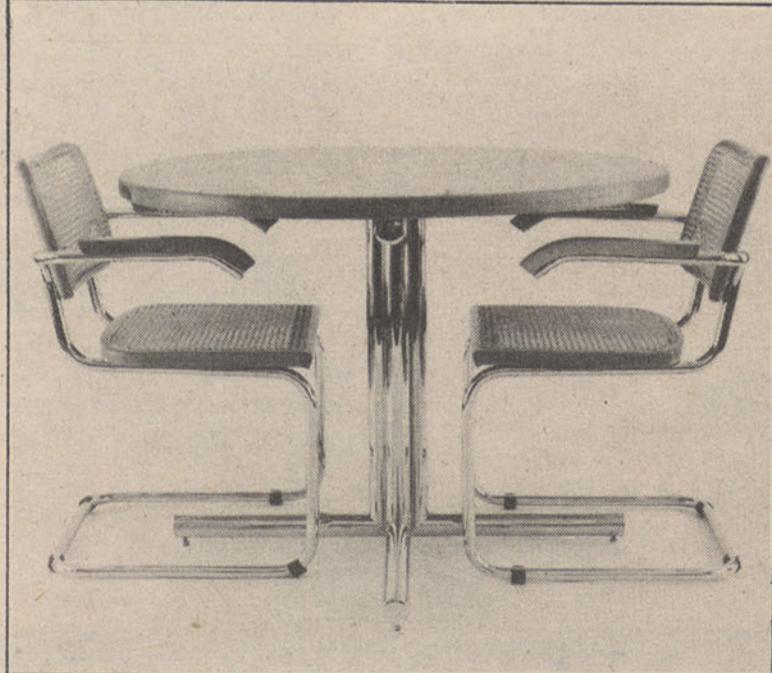
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CHANGES/continued

The Ann Arbor Mountain Jack's: a wild west fantasy, number 68 in a chain.

Two months ago it was bare land next to Jo-Ann's Fabrics in the Westgate shopping center on West Stadium at Maple. Now it's Mountain Jack's, a head-turning architectural fantasy of rough-sawn wood siding, part Swiss Chalet, part forest-ranger lookout tower. Prime rib and fresh fish are the specialties of this "beef, seafood, and spirits" operation, but the decor is the real show-stopper, beginning with the waterwheel, well house, crude wooden tombstones, rusty farm implements, and other Western props that greet customers as they approach the building. Inside, one passes through a waiting area disguised as a Victorian parlor, complete with tasseled lampshades and family pictures on the wall.

Mountain Jack's probably features more decor per square foot than any other restaurant around. In a four-booth area, measuring about 16 by 30 feet, I counted one drum head embellished with feathers; one Indian rug; two short, fat paddles; one bead-trimmed quiver with arrows; one bow with arrows; one stuffed pheasant; one rifle; one pistol; one pair snowshoes; one wood sign for James Wooley manure spreaders ("No load is too large."); one chandelier made of eight electrified tin lanterns with the bottoms removed; one lantern wall sconce; one device resembling a lacrosse stick; two pairs of antlers; two old mounted animal heads, possibly of bighorn sheep; one two-man bark canoe, hanging by ropes from the ceiling; one sock-shaped sign advertising darnless socks; two beveled glass windows used as partitions; one pair of skis; two pairs of ski poles; and seven framed prints depicting buffalo hunts, trappers and grizzly bears, Indians and horses, bighorn sheep, and incongruously, an old print entitled "Your British Birds," showing an example of probably every bird native to Britain.

Other small seating areas of the sprawling (356 seats, including 120 in the lounge) establishment are even more colorfully decorated. Three life-size mannequins play poker in the Hangtown Saloon, which advertises whiskey and ladies. Another tableau features two miners and an authentic mine car bought from a defunct Colorado mine.

Mountain Jack's, we learned, is owned and operated by Continental Restaurant Systems, a division of Ralston-Purina that operates 68 restaurants under 17 different names in 10 states, eight of them in the Midwest. Michigan has eight of CRS's theme restaurants: three other Mountain Jack's (in Farmington Hills, Troy and Lansing); J. Ross Browne's Whaling Stations in Warren and Okemos; and Stags & Hounds in Kentwood, Dearborn Heights, and Warren.

We spoke with Jim Blacketer, CRS's training coordinator, who spends 80% of his time on the road opening up new restaurants for the chain. He told me that this genre of theme restaurant is known in the trade as a "specialty dinner house";



A peek inside the Hangtown Saloon

that Smuggler's Inn, Great Lakes Steak, and The Gandy Dancer are other Ann Arbor examples; that CRS started in 1969 with a restaurant in California and one in Moline, Illinois; that its originators, who had previously worked with big restaurant chains, had expanded to seven restaurants by 1971, when Ralston-Purina "made 'em an offer they couldn't refuse"; and that about 60% of the CRS managers started out as production staff. The general manager of the Ann Arbor Mountain Jack's, Peggy Koesel, began as a cocktail waitress in the Lansing Mountain Jack's; Art Boehm, the Ann Arbor manager, started out there tending bar.

Three CRS decorators are in charge of rounding up items for the complex restaurant decor that is the chain's trademark. They travel around, going to auctions, sales, and antique shops, buying things up in quantity and shipping it to the CRS decor warehouse in San Diego. Another person travels around the country painting the signs on newly-built CRS restaurants—the signs that say things like "Zak's Hotel - Rooms - Baths" and "Fancy Ladies."

Why did Ann Arbor get a Mountain Jack's, and not a Monterey Jack's (Mexican food) or The Dock (nautical decor)? "We check out the local competition," Blacketer said. "Ann Arbor is a fun-type place, and Mountain Jack's is a fun restaurant where you can spill a drink on the floor and it doesn't matter."

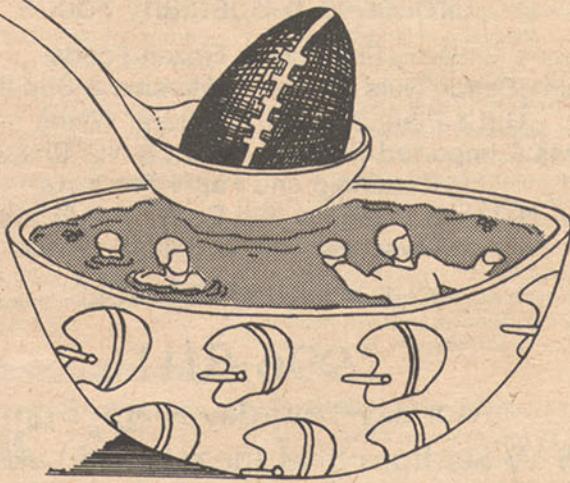
Finally—the food. At lunch (from 11:30 to 2 weekdays, different schedules for weekends) the menu consists mainly of burgers and sandwiches for \$2.95, including fries. There are also higher-priced fish and beef dishes, salads, quiches and crepes. For dinner (after 5 weekdays) the menu features "savories" like teriyaki chicken, pork chops and applesauce, and beef brochette, all for \$6.45, and prime rib, steak, and seafood, alone or in combination, at prices ranging from \$7.45 for a "petite" cut of prime rib to \$12.95 for a "petite" cut of prime rib together with broiled lobster. Dinners include rice or potato, vegetable, salad, and bread. Training coordinator Blacketer says that's a deal. He told me confidently, "I'll put our value-price relationship up to anyplace else in town."

PETER YATES

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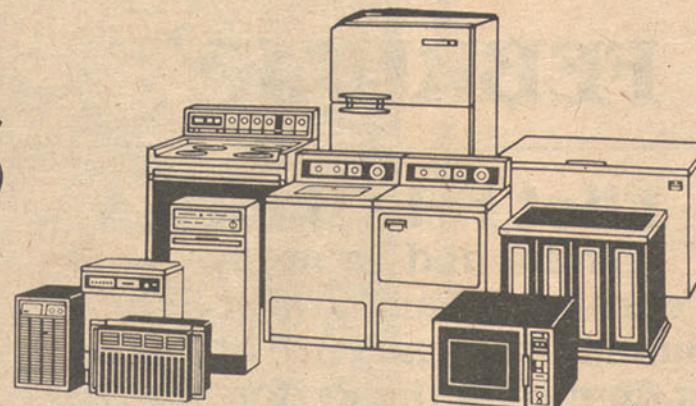
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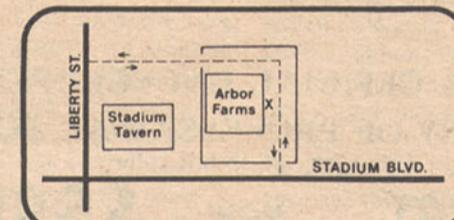
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CALENDAR

A selection of Ann Arbor events by our staff and contributors, with separate listings for exhibits and for music at local night spots.

TO PUBLICIZE EVENTS IN THE CALENDAR

Mail press releases and additional information to Susan Nisbett, Calendar Editor, Ann Arbor Observer, 206 South Main, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104. Do not phone in information, please. With a very few exceptions, events must be within Ann Arbor. Always include the address and phone number of a reachable contact person. The calendar is published a month ahead; notices for January events, for example, must arrive in December. All material received by the 15th of the preceding month can be used as space permits; material submitted later may or may not get in.

MUSIC AT NIGHT SPOTS

by Peter Zetlin

These bookings came from information available at press time. Last minute changes are always possible, so to be certain who will be playing, it's advisable to call ahead.

Each group is described the first time it appears. Subsequent listings have the group's name and date of appearance only.

The Ark, 1421 Hill, 761-1451

Ann Arbor's folk music center has a light schedule this month because it is involved in the Ann Arbor Folk Festival Jan. 13 at Power Center.

JAN. 18 & 19: **Peter "Madcat" Ruth**. Blues & jazz harmonica. JAN. 25 & 26: **Ken Whitley of the Original Sloth Band**. Ken's roots are in black gospel music. He plays guitar, banjo and mandolin, and his powerful voice has great dynamic range. FEB. 3: **The Gemini**. (8 p.m.) Twin brothers Sandor and Laszlo Slomovits play a variety of instruments including guitars, mandolin, violin, pennywhistle, and bones. They perform primarily their own songs and compositions, as well as folk music from the British Isles, Israel and their native Hungary. Their first album, "Songs from the Heartland," has been released recently by Solid Sound Records.

Bimbo's Downtown, 114 E. Washington. 665-3231

The Gaslighters continue their 15-year engagement of Dixieland sing-a-long music. Fri. & Sat. nights.

Black Jack Tavern, Win Schuler's, 3600 Plymouth Rd. 769-9400

JAN. 2-12: **Sequise**. JAN. 14-15: **Sue Aeschliman**. JAN. 16-19 **Soiree**. JAN. 21-22: **Sue Aeschliman**. JAN. 23-26: **Soiree**. JAN. 28-29: **Sue Aeschliman**.

The Blind Pig, 208 S. First. 994-4780

Contrary to the expectations of many, the Pig goes on essentially the same after last month's change of ownership.

JAN 4-5: **Rockabilly Cats**. 50's rockabilly, from Downriver Detroit. Could be a good group, but in their recent first appearance at the Pig, they were too nervous. JAN. 11-12: **Rebirth**. Wendell Harrison on sax and Harold McKinney on piano. These well-known Detroit jazzmen play the spectrum from turn-of-the-century to contemporary. Regulars at the Pig. JAN. 18-19: **Honey Boys**. About as close to contemporary R&B as you might find at the Pig; some R&B. Tight band with Ann Arbor regular Gary Churchill on sax. A bit on the loud side. JAN. 25-26: **Steve Nardella**. Definitely the rockabilly band to hear. Formerly the Silver-tones. The focus has shifted to spotlight

Nardella, who has calmed down his harp and stresses more vocals. Now more aware of the commercial side of things, Steve is making his music as digestible as possible. George Bedard can play the hell out of his Epiphone guitar. Their new L.P., "It's All Rock & Roll," is getting some local air play. EVERY MONDAY: **Boogie Woogie Red**. Barrel-house piano and blues vocals. Red has played with some of the best musicians, toured Europe, and now, as he gets older, he takes the bus up from Detroit to play a relaxed gig at the Pig. Red is an accomplished keyboard man, although his blues is definitely not commercial; you can hear "the source" speaking when he plays. Watch out, though. Red can tend to wander and interrupt himself a bit. Everyone ought to hear Red at least once.

The Earle, 121 West Washington, 994-0217. As the Earle's restaurant gets its feet solidly planted, music has changed from the former jazz club's range, to the softer sound of jazz trios and solo pianos. The first set starts off quietly to allow patrons to finish dinner. The second and third sets have a bit more punch.

The Earle's schedule was not complete, but they gave us the following: WEDNESDAYS & THURSDAYS: **Ron Brooks Trio**. Ron, practically the grand old man of Ann Arbor jazz, displays superb intonation on the acoustic bass. Good solos. He usually closes each set with a piano and vocal number. Fans wish his singing matched his bass playing. Larry Bell on drums. Kevin O'Connell has been doing excellent keyboard work, but will soon be gone to test the waters in New York City. Ron's former drummer, Danny Spencer, is rumored to be visiting Ann Arbor to take a break from his assault on the Big Apple. JAN. 4-5: **Bob Wilson Trio**. Wide piano repertoire with soft vocals. New to Ann Arbor, Bob has been playing with a six-piece group at Big Daddy's in Saline. SUNDAY NIGHTS: **Bob Wilson** — solo piano & vocal. MONDAY NIGHTS: **Steve Moews** — Solo piano.

Mr. Flood's Party, 120 W. Liberty, 994-5940. JAN. 2: **Steve Newhouse and the Nukeabilities**. Raucous and rowdy country-flavored R&R led by wild man Newhouse. Newhouse, who looks a lot like Col. Sanders, uses his 100-ft guitar cord to run through the crowd as he plays, and at Flood's he has been known to play while lying down in the middle of Liberty Street. Rick's American Cafe tells us they beat their former liquor sales record every time the Nukeabilities play. Some folks say they would like to hear Newhouse, but the crowd gets too wild for them. JAN. 3-5: **Steve Nardella Band**. JAN. 6: **Morgan & Cunningham**. JAN. 7: **Neil Woodward**. JAN. 8: **Eric Glatz**. Slick acoustic slide guitar. Working men's songs, spiced with non-political favorites. JAN. 9: **Footloose**.

Acoustic folk. Strong singing by Patty O'Connor from Misbehaving. JAN. 10: **Stark Raving Review**. Led by Peter Stark, this band draws from generally high-caliber musicians who often have regular gigs with other groups: the performance can depend upon who's available at the time. Peter plays a strong rhythm guitar, and the audience generally prefers it when he doesn't sing. JAN. 11-12: **Steve Newhouse & The Nukeabilities**. JAN. 13: **Trees**. Swinging, homespun country & rock in an individual style. Good vocal harmony by two women singers. Original and sensitive material. JAN. 14: **Morgan & Cunningham**. JAN. 15: **Andy Boller**, or, as he sometimes bills himself, Randy Dollar. He is the keyboard player with the Nukeabilities. He is taking the commercial aspects of the music business seriously, buying new equipment, and playing in a style that has been called "Elton John clone." JAN. 16: **Steve Newhouse & The Nukeabilities**. JAN. 17: **Arbor Grass**. JAN. 18: **Trees**. JAN. 21: **Steve Newhouse**. JAN. 23-24: **Ellen McIlwaine**. Blues, jazz, electric guitar. This big woman tears into her songs with a raw and screaming but somehow still sensitive voice. JAN. 25-26: **Five Guys Named Moe**. Uptempo bluegrass.

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CALENDAR /continued

Formerly Red Mt. String Band. JAN. 27: Trees. JAN. 28: Steve Newhouse. JAN. 29: Andy Boller. JAN. 30: Chris Smither. JAN. 31: Footloose.

Old Heidelberg, 215 N. Main, 663-7758
JAN. 4 & 5, 11 & 12, 18 & 19: Mustard's Retreat. Folk & English ballads and folksong originals. Rousing beer hall songs. Irish ditties. Sing-a-long music.

Poor Richard's Cocktail Lounge, Arborland Shopping Center, 971-6877.
JAN. 8-19: Summit. Energetic party group. Top 40 R&R and disco. JAN. 15-FEB. 2: Rainbow. Top 40 and some disco. Well-dressed five-piece group.

Rick's American Cafe, 611 Church Street, 996-2747.

JAN. 4-5: Vantage Point. Funky, loud pop jazz for the casual jazz listener. Sax, guitar, bass, keyboard & drums. Vantage Point, currently trying to shed its jazz image, is now leaning more toward a rock sound. One of the tightest groups in town. JAN. 8: Steve Nardella. JAN. 9: Catfish Hodge is a hard-partying, Detroit Musician from the old school. Rollicking blues. JAN. 11-12: Dick Seigel & His Ministers of Melody. Lively old R&R, blues & originals, dance music. Among the songs written by Dick are "What Would Brando Do?", which asks what would Brando do with a woman who tells her lover that she has slept with his best friend. Unfortunately, Brando doesn't have an answer. "Downsized Cadillac Blues," even the Caddy's not the same anymore. JAN. 15: Eclipse Jam Session. Spontaneous gathering of whichever musicians want to play. Regular David Swain on sax is from the 2-5-1 Orchestra. The Jam Session is just getting organized. JAN. 16: Emerald City. Top 40 & original. New in Ann Arbor. JAN. 17: John Mooney. Blues singer, guitar & dobro player, plus 3-piece back-up. Influenced by Robert Johnson & Son House, Mooney has a record out on the Blind Pig label. JAN. 18&19&22: Steve Nardella. JAN. 23: Humphrey Bogart Birthday Party. He would have been 81. Blue Front Persuaders (a history band) plays blues & older R&R. You can dance to it without realizing it's blues. Loud. JAN. 24: Vantage Point. JAN. 25-26: Blue Front Persuaders. JAN. 29: Jam Session. JAN. 30: Melodioso. Latin island music with lots of percussion. The band feels good and communicates it to the audience, good dancing. JAN. 31: Blue Front Persuaders.

Second Chance, 516 E. Liberty, 994-5350.
JAN. 1-3: Cinema. Top 40 R&R. A local group with a following from frats and dorms. JAN. 4-6: Mugsy & Kub Koda. Kub on lead guitar & vocals. R&R, about half are original tunes. Kub is best known as the composer of the teeny-bopper rock hit "Smoking in the Boys Room." JAN. 7: Jam Session. Benefit for 1980 Olympics; unbooked talent. JAN. 9-13: Moriah. JAN. 15: Vantage Point. JAN. 16-20: Shakers. 60's & 70's R&R. From Madison, Wis. Quite theatrical. JAN. 20: Joe Cocker. Nationally known. His rough voice and style are similar to Ray Charles. Blue-eyed soul. JAN. 21: Destroy All Monsters. Ron on guitar and Niagra on vocals are the trend-setters for local New Wavers. Their heavy-metal sound includes originals such as their story of the Kennedy assassination "Grab Those Brains Jack." Niagra, whose lily-white flesh hardly ever sees the light of day, wears outrageous costumes; Ron is often attired in what can best be described as a Nazi-Hippie outfit. JAN. 23-27: Mariner. Top 40 R&R. Winners of Detroit Rock-Off for most popular bar band. JAN. 30-31: Newt & the Salamanders. A repertoire from Frank Zappa to Lawrence Welk. Includes trumpet, trombone & sax.

Star Bar, 109 North Main, 668-9520
The Star is doing a bit of remodeling. Spurred on by Johnny Thunder of Gang Wars, who pulled down part of the ceiling at his last gig, the Star has decided to remove the rest of the ceiling. Manager Jim Burke tells us he would be happy to have Gang Wars back—as long as they put up a small damage deposit.

JAN. 2: Reggae & New Wave. Good dancing to all kinds of records you won't hear on the radio. JAN. 3: Friends. Members of local bands, including musicians from Stark Raving

Review. JAN. 4-5: Cartoons. Detroit R&R group. JAN. 9: Reggae & New Wave. JAN. 10: Emerald City. JAN. 11-12: Steve Newhouse. JAN. 16: Reggae & New Wave. JAN. 17: Steve Nardella. JAN. 18-19: Blue Front Persuaders. JAN. 23: Reggae & New Wave. JAN. 24: Melodioso. JAN. 25-26: Trees.

Zelda's Greenhouse, 3250 Washtenaw Rd., 971-1100

Zelda's is expanding its bar into the Garden Room during the latter part of January, so bookings are uncertain for that time.

JAN. 2-5: Bulletz. Four-piece & female vocal. JAN. 9-12: Silver. JAN. 16-19: Sachez. Four-pieces & singer.

EVENTS

6 SUNDAY

"Hansel and Gretel"—Ann Arbor Civic Ballet

An original ballet in two acts, choreographed by the company's directors. Music includes selections from the opera *Hansel and Gretel* by Humperdinck and from the ballet works of Glazunov, Shostakovich, and Delibes. A few fairy, lollipops, gingerbread men, fireflies, and angels people the haunted forest Hansel and Gretel traverse on their way to the candy cottage.

1:30 and 5 p.m., Power Center. Tickets, \$2 children, \$4 adults. Available at: Jacobson's Tix/Info; Murphy's Landing; Sylvia Studio of Dance; Willoughby's Little Boot Shops; First Position; Generations; and the Power Center Box on the day of performance. Group rates available. Call 668-8066.

6 SUNDAY and 7 MONDAY

"West Side Story"

Glorious Leonard Bernstein score and Jerome Robbins choreography, fine acting, singing, and dancing in this tale of love and street warfare in the slums of New York. The 1963 film version of the Broadway musical.

8 p.m., Michigan Theater, E. Liberty near State. \$2. Doors open 7:30 p.m.; come early and hear the theater organ.

7 MONDAY

Photography Seminar at Artworlds

A free three-hour workshop divided into one-hour sections: Basic Photography; An Invitation to the Darkroom; and An Introduction to the Studio. Attend one, two, or all three parts. Refreshments served.

7-10 p.m., Artworlds, 213½ S. Main. Free.

8 TUESDAY

Friends of the Library bookstore opens

Starting today, the Friends of the Library will be open for business at the Main Library on the second Tuesday of each month. They invite Ann Arborites to visit the store to stock up on good winter reading material.

11 a.m.-3 p.m., Main Library, S. Fifth and William.

8 TUESDAY

"Booked for Lunch": "The Hospice Movement"

Robert Thompson, President of the Board of Directors of Hospice of Washtenaw, Inc., reviews Sandol Stoddard's *The Hospice Movement* and discusses the services and objectives of the local Hospice project. The Hospice movement focuses on providing supportive services to the terminally ill and their families.

12:10 p.m., Meeting Room, Main Library, S. Fifth Ave. and William, Free. Listeners may bring bag lunches; coffee and tea are provided free of charge.

"The Harder They Come" (Perry Henzell, 1973) at Cinema II

This perennial campus favorite floats you away from the Michigan winter on a fume of Jamaican ganja and the lift of steady reggae music. The energetic narrative of the rise and fall of a Jamaican pop singer sensuously conveys the heady mix of revolution and music which is so strong a force in Jamaica today, and Jimmy Cliff delivers a high-powered per-

formance and great songs.

—Harvey Hamburgh

\$1.50 7, 9 and 11 p.m., Auditorium A, Angell Hall.

The Carla Bley Band

Brought to Ann Arbor by Eclipse Jazz, composer Carla Bley has a repertoire that ranges from whimsical to awe inspiring. Her pieces often have grand themes and tend to be intellectual. Although she is called "the mother of avant garde jazz" Bley appears not to like this image, as she was reported to have replied, "I wish I had put that bastard to sleep when he was an infant." Her eight piece band often includes some of the best jazz musicians.

7:30 p.m., Power Center. Tickets \$6.50, Michigan Union Box Office, Schoolkids' and Discount Records in Ann Arbor, or by mail (send a self-addressed stamped envelope along with a certified check or money order to: Eclipse/Bley, Room 3411 Michigan Union, 530 S. State, Ann Arbor, Mi. 48109).

Ann Arbor Chamber Orchestra "Symphony" Concert

The program includes: Richard Strauss' Duo Concertante with Jay DeVries, clarinet, and Eric Haugen, bassoon; Musgrave's Night Music; Warlock's Capriol Suite; and Schubert's Symphony No. 5. During the long intermission, patrons can purchase gourmet refreshments and a pre-concert dinner catered by The Moveable Feast.

8:45 p.m., Michigan Theater, E. Liberty near State. Tickets, \$6, by calling the Chamber Orchestra Society at 996-0066.

13 SUNDAY

Open House at the Michigan Theater

Organist Rupert Otto plays the magnificent Barton Theater organ in an informal one-hour concert. Refreshments follow.

10 a.m., Michigan Theater. Free.

Winter Wildlife Nature Walk

Naturalist Matt Heumann leads a two-hour walk along Fleming Creek, pointing out the animal world visible only in winter.

10 a.m., U-M Botanical Gardens, Dixboro Rd. Meet at the Conservatory. Free. Sponsored by the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission.

Third Ann Arbor Folk Festival

The Office of Major Events presents nationally-known folk artists in two performances. The artists, with the exception of Bromberg, will appear in only one show. Performers will donate their fees to The Ark, a bastion of folk music in Ann Arbor for the last 14 years.

David Bromberg has an electric stage presence and the ability to deliver seemingly impossible guitar licks. He is known for his ability to cross between rock and folk styles, and has played with Bob Dylan, Jerry Jeff Walker, and many famous musicians. John Hammond, Jr is the son of John Hammond, Sr., a Columbia Record producer who has been responsible for discovering a vast number of folk and blues artists. He performs ethnic blues with an authentic, yet non-mimicking delivery.

Owen McBride will be the master of ceremonies. His music is a mixture of bawdy Irish songs, soft ballads, outrageous jokes, rebel yells, and scurrilous stories performed with a hilarious and easy-going style.

Mary McCaslin's songs appear on pop, country and folk music charts. Her voice has an excellent range and a pleasing, easy quality.

Jim Ringer is a big, burly man who sings sensitive country songs. He has also gathered rarely-heard pieces from acquaintances.

The Red Clay Ramblers are a floor-stomping string band who emphasize ensemble playing and song content. As the Soho Weekly News said, "[this is] the disco sound of our forefathers."

Leon Redbone sings blues from the 1910s and '20s. He sounds so much like an old 78 you can hear the cracks.

Hedy West does songs from her native Georgia mountains: ballads, broadsides, minstrels, cowboy songs and country parlor. Perhaps best known as the composer of "500 Miles," she has a powerful voice and plays excellent guitar and banjo.

2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., Power Center. Tickets, \$7.50 per show or \$12.50 for both shows. Tickets available Dec. 5 at Michigan Union box office, Schoolkids Records, Herb David's Guitar Studio. Information 763-5110.

"The Great Dictator" (Charles Chaplin, 1940) at Cinema Guild

Jack Oakie plays blustering Mussolini, and Charlie Chaplin plays Hitler (who perhaps copied Chaplin's mustache style?) and also a Jew victimized by the tyranny sweeping Europe. After the satirical narrative is played out, Chaplin himself comes forward to make his plea against Fascism. Some condemned the comedian for getting involved in politics and speaking out like this, but surely the concluding speech of "The Great Dictator" is one of Chaplin's most poignant, impassioned moments on film.

—Harvey Hamburgh

7 and 9:05 p.m., Old Architecture Auditorium on Monroe. \$1.50

14 MONDAY

"Persona" (Ingmar Bergman, 1966) at Cinema Guild

Bergman's masterpiece. Liv Ullman plays an actress who suddenly finds herself incapable of speech (or is her silence willfully imposed?) Nurse Bibi Andersson is assigned to accompany the actress to a secluded island, where the Strindbergian conflict between the personalities of the two women is played out. The masks of human role-playing are shattered, just as are the glass on the veranda in a key scene, and the film itself, running its illusion through the projector. Bergman achieves one of the great cinematic effects of his career and subverts the illusion which is his theme, but replaying one dramatic scene and switching our viewpoint. Depth of thought, feeling and execution make *Persona* one of the greatest of films.

—Harvey Hamburgh

7 and 9:05 p.m., Old Architecture Auditorium on Monroe. \$1.50

17 THURSDAY

Ars Musica Concert

The thirteen members of *Ars Musica*, Ann Arbor's Baroque music specialists, open their tenth season with J. S. Bach's Sinfonia from Cantata No. 42, A. Scarlatti's Quartet in A minor for recorder, two violins and continuo; J. S. Bach's Concerto in D minor for harpsichord and strings; Monsieur Naudot's Concerto in G major for recorder and strings; and G. P. Telemann's Overture, Suite and Conclusion from Tafelmusik III for two oboes, bassoon and strings.

Ars Musica uses original 18th-century instruments and historical reproductions, which produce a softer and more delicate tone than their familiar modern counterparts.

8 p.m., Michigan League Ballroom. Tickets, \$7.50 and \$6. At Liberty Music Shop.

18 FRIDAY

AstroFest Program 86: "Perils Imagined and Real"

A program on threats to life on our planet—or, at least, phenomena that are perceived as such. But there is a strange psychology about such phenomena: the less real the actual danger, the more seriously it gets taken, by the mass media and therefore by the general, unsuspecting public. *Skylab-Space Station I* is one of NASA's very finest documentary films, made five years ago after the conclusion of the single most successful space project ever flown by anyone. The mass media chose to ignore these discoveries, then invented the "danger" (in fact completely nonexistent) of Skylab's reentry last July. By contrast, Earthquakes are a danger that is very real. Yet the politicians we allow to run our lives find it easier to ignore them than to support the science trying to deal with them, detailed in our second film, *Predictable Disaster*, from the highly-acclaimed PBS-TV series "Nova." Finally, the BBC documentary *The Case of the Bermuda Triangle* compares reality with the flourishing industry of quick-buck pseudoscience books and finds the latter wanting.

—Jim Loudon

7:30 p.m., Modern Languages Building, Auditorium 3. Free.

19 SATURDAY

Concert of African Music

Graduate student and music educator Kwasi Aduonum.

8 p.m., Pendleton Room, 2nd Floor, Michigan Union. Free.

20 SUNDAY

Les Grands Ballets Canadiens

The afternoon performance ranges from the neoclassicism of Balanchine's Concerto Barocco and the balletic modernism of Paul Taylor's

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Ann Arbor Recreation Department Winter 1980



Evening Registration

When: January 15 and 16 from 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Where: East Cafeteria of Pioneer High School. Enter the building at the flagpole entrance. First-come, first-serve.

In person registration on these two evenings is strongly encouraged, as classes will be filled on a first-come, first serve basis. In person and mail-in registration will continue at the Recreation Department Office through January 30.

The Ann Arbor Recreation Department will offer the following programs during the Winter 1980 term:

Special Recreation for the Impaired & Disabled

Senior Adult Activities

Racquetball Classes and Leagues

Advanced Lifesaving

Water Safety Instruction

Youth and Adult Swim

Fitness Swim

Swim and Slim

Karate

Jogging Club

Gymnastics

Recreation Volleyball

Recreation Basketball

Scuba

Yoga

Dance

Art

Music • Drama

For complete details on these programs, refer to the Winter/Spring brochure available at the Recreation Department Office, area schools, libraries, banks, and city and county buildings.

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CALENDAR/continued

Aureole, to the Firebird of trendy Maurice Béjart and the folk-inspiration of Canadian choreographer Brian Macdonald's Tam di Delam.

The evening brings a repeat of Tam di Delam, plus another work by Canadian choreographer Macdonald, Double Quartet. Lar Lubovitch's choreography for Stravinsky's Les Noces completes the program

3 and 8 p.m., Power Center. Tickets, \$6.50-10, University Musical Society, Burton Tower, 665-3717.

Kiwanis "Travel and Adventure Series"—Norway

Brighten Ann Arbor's coldest month with a trip, via film, to "Norway, Land of the Midnight Sun," narrated by Joe Adair. Proceeds go to Kiwanis community projects.

Show at 3 p.m., organ prelude at 2:30 p.m. Michigan Theater, E. Liberty near State. Tickets at the door, \$3.50 adults, \$1.75 children

20 SUNDAY and 21 MONDAY

"Band Wagon" at the Michigan Theater

The 1954 MGM film starring Cyd Charisse and Fred Astaire.

8 p.m., Michigan Theater, E. Liberty near State. \$2. Doors open at 7:30; come early and hear the magnificent theater organ.

21 MONDAY

"The Passion of Joan of Arc" (Carl Dreyer, 1928) at Cinema Guild

If you were told that a silent film consisted almost exclusively of close-ups of the faces of antagonists at a trial, you might consider this experiment the height of claustrophobic boredom, but this is exactly what Danish director Dreyer did in "The Passion of Joan of Arc," and the result is intensely dramatic, dynamic, and unforgettable. The spiritualized, ineffable performance of Maria Falconetti evokes the transcendent crisis of Joan of Arc, based on documents that had only recently been discovered in 1928. Dreyer's mystical cinema, so often occupied with the human confrontation with death, is at its peak in this classic of the silent film.

—Harvey Hamburger

7 and 9:05 p.m. Old Architecture Auditorium on Monroe. \$1.50

22 TUESDAY

"Alphaville" (Jean-Luc Godard, 1965) at Cinema II

The first in a series of Godard films to be presented this semester. The most avant-guard of the French New Wave directors, Godard dabbled in all the hallowed genres of filmdom and here quite wittily mixed science fiction with the hard-boiled detective story. Eddie Constantine plays the hero with Bogartian malaise. The film is set in an antispective Paris of the future, where love and art have been outlawed by a ruling class of computers. The only "special effects" are in some negative images of Paris; the real fun here is in the fine blend of futurism, philosophy and Hollywood.

—Harvey Hamburger

7 and 9 p.m., Modern Language Building, Auditorium 3. \$1.50

26 SATURDAY

U-M Dance Company — Menotti's "The Unicorn, The Gorgon, and The Manticore"

A repeat performance of this delightful madrigal-fable about a poet and his beasts, staged last year in honor of the School of Music's 100th Birthday. Elizabeth Weil Bergmann's choreography captures the picturesque nature of the story with boldness and simplicity. The Ann Arbor Cantata Singers perform Menotti's witty madrigal accompaniment.

3 and 8 p.m., Power Center for the Performing Arts. Tickets, PTP Box Office, Michigan League, or Hudsons.

University Gamelan Ensemble

Javanese gamelan music by the U-M's excellent ensemble, directed by Judith Becker. Guest artist Yohanes Sumandiyo Hadi joins the group.

The gamelan, or Javanese orchestra, is composed of chimes of various materials, gongs, drums, stringed instruments and flutes.

9 p.m., Hill Auditorium. Free.

27 SUNDAY

Concord String Quartet

This premiere performance of George Rochberg's String Quartet No. 7 with Voice was commissioned for the Centennial of the U-M School of Music. It is sung by Leslie Guinn, for whom it was composed.

8:30 p.m., Rackham Auditorium. Tickets \$4-7, University Musical Society, Burton Tower, 665-3717.

The Glinka Chorus of Leningrad

The 65-member Glinka mixed-voice chorus is now on its first U.S. tour. Its repertoire includes works by Russian and European choral masters.

8:30 p.m., Hill Auditorium. \$4.50-8. University Musical Society, Burton Tower, 665-3717.

through JANUARY

Skating in the Parks

The Ann Arbor Parks Department will flood areas for ice skating in seven area parks, beginning January 2, provided the weather cooperates. Allmendinger, Burns, Ellsworth, Northside, Scheffler, Summit, and West Parks. Skating is free, and there will be supervised hours daily. Don't forget that there is also skating for a nominal charge at Veterans Ice Arena (indoor), Buh Park, and Fuller Park (artificial outdoor rinks).

7 MONDAY

Registration for The Collaborative's Art Workshops

The University of Michigan Artists and Craftsmen Guild begins registration for eight-week workshops starting the last week in January. Offerings include papermaking, puppetmaking, photography, quilting, weaving, fantasy drawing, figure drawing, graphic design, soft sculpture, watercolor, leaded glass, calligraphy, and jewelry. Most classes meet from 7 to 9 p.m. Fees, \$25 for students and Guild members; \$30 for the general public. Call 763-4430.

8 TUESDAY through WEDNESDAY

27 FEBRUARY

Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission Cross-Country Ski Program

Learn the basics of cross-country skiing at instruction sessions given every Tuesday and Wednesday through February by WCPARC, snow permitting. Equipment is provided for the 1½ hour program, or bring your own. Designed for beginning or intermediate skiers.

6:30 and 8:30 p.m. sessions, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Sites are the Fuller Recreation Area in Ann Arbor and West Middle School in Ypsilanti. Interested skiers must register in advance (one session only)! and may designate either early or late session. Forms available at the County Recreation Center, 4133 Washtenaw, Ann Arbor; Ann Arbor Public Library on S. Fifth Ave. Early registration advised. \$3.00 per skier. Further information by calling the WCPARC office at 973-2595.

12 SATURDAY

Art Demo Day at the Ann Arbor Art Association

Instructors for the Association's winter classes, which begin January 21, demonstrate techniques of stained glass, sculpture and soft sculpture, ceramics, painting, and watercolor. Works by the Art Association faculty will be on display.

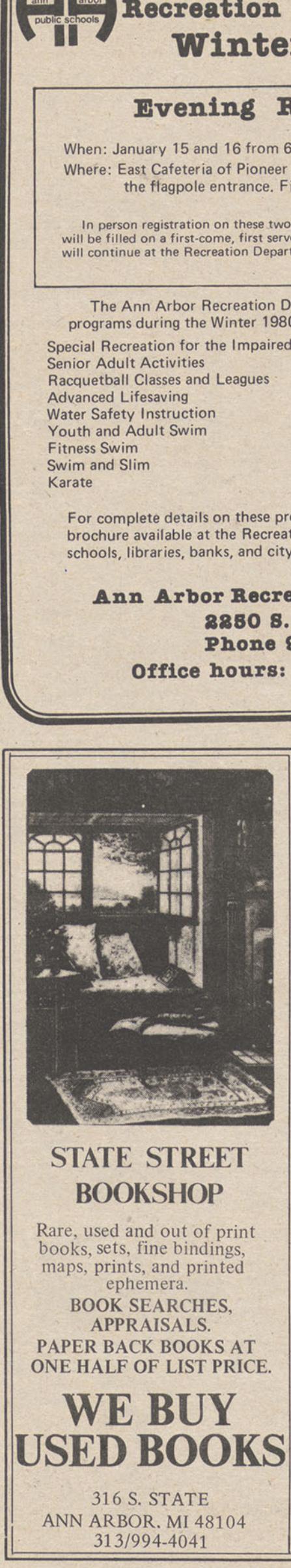
10 a.m.-3 p.m., Ann Arbor Art Association, 117 W. Liberty. Free.

15 TUESDAY and 16 WEDNESDAY

Registration for Ann Arbor Recreation Department Classes

In-person sign-up for Winter 1980 classes in dance, drama, art, music, and some sports. For a complete listing of the Recreation Department's offerings for children and adults, consult their Winter/Spring Brochure, available at the Recreation Department Office (2250 S. Seventh), area schools, banks, and city and county buildings.

6:30-8:30 p.m., East Cafeteria, Pioneer High School Late registration through Jan. 30 at the Recreation Department Office, (994-2326).



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RESTAURANTS

Three Sunday brunches.



In front of the goldfish tank at Leopold Bloom's.

PETER YATES

By ANNETTE CHURCHILL

When the Michigan Union, about a dozen years ago, announced that it would serve brunch on Sunday mornings from 9:30 until noon, Ann Arbor sophisticates greeted the news with amusement. Half past nine is about right for a late breakfast of eggs and bacon or pancakes and sausage. But these dishes hardly fit the definition of brunch. Liquor is part of the brunch mystique, and Sunday brunch hours don't begin until noon. It turned out that the Union had interpreted brunch to mean a nice big breakfast. It is nothing of the kind.

Going to a restaurant for brunch is a big-city custom, and New York is pre-eminently the brunch town. On Sundays the city is transformed in mood. The relentless pressure of business and the sense of hurry are gone. Sunday traffic is light, commuters are home for the day, and New York belongs to New Yorkers. They set forth to reclaim their beloved city, to stroll in its streets, and perhaps to stop for a leisurely and elegant brunch. New York, I believe, invented this meal.

If brunch is not a nice big breakfast, neither is it an early Sunday dinner after church. With stylistic (as well as linguistic) links to both breakfast and lunch, it is nevertheless a distinctly identifiable meal, different from any other. Brunch is a large meal but a light one. It leans heavily toward egg preparations like omelettes and eggs Benedict, smoked or fresh fish dishes, light grilled meats like chicken livers or kidneys, and cheese in many forms. Cocktails often precede the meal.

Today Ann Arbor is developing a new Sunday mood of its own. There seems to be more Sunday visiting going on. One senses that people are looking for interesting things to do on that day. Informal Sunday afternoon parties have become popular, and there are the beginnings of a thriving brunch trade in area restaurants.

The Café Creole, at 111 Catherine, across from the north end of the old Main Street Post Office building, serves Sunday brunch from 11:30 to 4. (Reservations are advisable. Tel: 665-2992.) Splendid live jazz provided by Morris Lawrence and his Afromusicology Ensemble surprises and cheers first-time visitors as they enter. The minimal decor in the high-tech style (industrial lamp fixtures, exposed duct work on the ceilings, and iron factory railings marking off the



Morris Lawrence at the Café Creole.

different areas of the restaurant) establishes the informal feeling of the place. The lively crowd of young professional people is clearly in a happy mood.

Our waitress brings us coffee to drink while we peruse the menu. The coffee is weak and tentative in flavor — in a word, dreadful. New Orleans, whose cuisine is the inspiration for the Café Creole, is almost as famous for its rich, strong, biting bitter coffee brewed with chicory as it is for its jazz. Something simply must be done about this, the worst cup of coffee in Ann Arbor. After the coffee, though, things pick up.

Noon seems a shade early for Absinthe Suisse, Gin Fizzes, Sazeracs, and the other bar offerings from the New Orleans repertoire, so we proceed to the entrees. Eggs Sardou at a mere \$4.60 prove to be a variation on eggs Florentine: two huge poached eggs on a bed of spinach, sauced with Hollandaise. Underneath all this are two excellent and large artichoke hearts. While the spinach has an unfortunate olive drab color, the dish is well cooked and tasty. File Gumbo (with chicken, garlic sausage, and tomatoes made fiery with cayenne pepper) is excellent. Jambalaya, halfway between soup and stew, with crab, creole shrimp, sausage, and again hot pepper, is also good. A stuffed trout with crab at \$8.75 is the specialty of the day. Filled with an herbed crab-and-bread stuffing and covered with a peppery and richly tomato-flavored sauce, the trout is a triumph. We finish up a really lovely brunch with a slice of banana bread, homemade and delicious. The musicians are taking a break now, and Morris Lawrence visits among the brunchers, filling the room with his immense and warm personality. Brunch at the Café Creole is more than a meal out. It is an event.

On another Sunday I look in on Leopold Bloom's. (118 West Liberty, Sat. brunch 11 - 3; Sunday brunch 11 - 3:30. Tel: 665-3333) I always love just being in this place, enveloped in its art nouveau atmosphere which manages simultaneously to evoke the decadent beauty and patent silliness of the decorative style that flourished at the turn of the century. Besides using beautiful bevelled glass lavishly and selecting authentic flower-form lighting fixtures, the decorator [restaurant owner Ned Duke] has hung on the walls priceless examples of the witless sexual allegories that were popular at that time. They consist of pink and dreamily concupiscent female nudes making love to calla lilies, half-heartedly resisting the advances of a huge black swan, or cavorting inexplicably with three greyhounds. I love the interior design of Leopold Bloom's so much I almost don't care what the food is like. It's just as well. The menu here is short and entirely egg-related. Besides eggs Benedict and Florentine (\$4.35) there are five omelettes (mushroom mornay, broccoli, avocado, chicken with creole sauce, and seafood) ranging in price from \$3.95 to \$6.25. Steak and eggs is \$7.95 and a "quiche du jour" \$4.25. A conscientious researcher probably should try that quiche, but this cliché of the 70's has become so ubiquitous that I can't face quiches any more. We order one omelette mornay with mushrooms and one with creole sauce. They are enormous — made with four eggs, we are told — and have the flavor of not-quite-fresh-eggs. Moreover, they are curiously tough, so much so that for one insane moment I toy with the explanation that they have been cooked ahead like crepes and reheated somehow for service. Our waitress assures us this is not so. The creole sauce is adequate but less complicated and interesting than that served at the Cafe Creole. The mushrooms taste canned and are water-logged. They are covered with shreds of Swiss cheese that has not become warm enough to melt. Still, the omelettes are edible, and I like being with the well-dressed crowd at Leopold Bloom's on a Sunday afternoon, with bright sunshine streaming into that jewel-like interior. Maybe next time I'll select the quiche after all.

Sunday brunch at Mantels (Briarwood Hilton, 610 Hilton Blvd., Tel: 665-5626) is a big deal, and the prices reflect the fact, ranging from \$6.25 to \$9.75 for the entrees. Brunch is served from the unfashionable hour of 9 until 2. The interior of the old Hilton restaur-

rant has been warmed up considerably by the decor, which features mantlepieces from late Victorian houses and even cozy-looking bookcases filled with the miscellany of novels one finds in rented summer cottages.

The minute one is seated, a waitress brings over a large stemmed glass filled with delicious fresh-squeezed orange juice, which she offers to enhance with a splash of white, sparkling Catawba grape juice. This combination turns out to be an inspiration. When one has finished the juice, she offers a refill. This terrific brunch opener must have the effect of turning people away from the bar offerings, all priced at \$1.50, which feature such weird things as "The Bird — Wild Turkey (bourbon) and apple cider" and "The Michigan Sunrise — A Mixologist's Dream of Champagne, Orange Juice, Vodka with a Splash of Uncola and topped with a dash of Grenadine for the Sunrise effect." Vodka and prune juice is called "The Pile Driver — If it works, Two Bucks," which is hard to beat for pure class.

Mantels features a cold table for \$5.25 alone, but access to it is yours with any entree. On it are cute little bagels and cream cheese whipped with lox, assorted cheeses, fresh fruits, Danish pastries, and lots of dessert-like things — little cheesecake strips, English trifle (blueberry), etc. The cold table leans toward sweet things, and a brunch guest might like to visit it after the entree.

As for the entrees, six three-egg, open-faced omelettes called frittatas are featured. I like one that is covered with white asparagus and Boursin cheese (\$7.50). The eggs are very fresh. Cheese blintzes need a little salt in the cheese filling. Good but very sweet stewed apples and raisins cover them generously. Chicken livers, as offered here, are an enormous meal consisting of eight or ten whole livers served on half a small loaf of French bread. They seem, from their steamed taste, to have been prepared ahead and held. They are covered by a not-bad Bordelaise sauce which is rather thick and comes with a tell-tale, shiny skin suggestive of microwave treatment. Do they zap the whole dish to warm it? Whatever they do, it arrives on this occasion barely warm.

Brunch at Mantels is extremely filling. The brunch crowd is up in mood, and the atmosphere is decidedly festive. If the food, for all its lavish quantity and dazzling variety, has the mysteriously-arrived-at, featureless personality of all food conceived by restaurant consultants, it is still good of its kind. And that orange juice is terrific. □

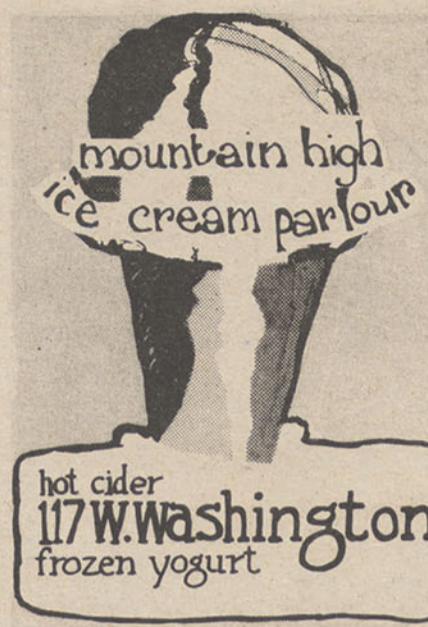
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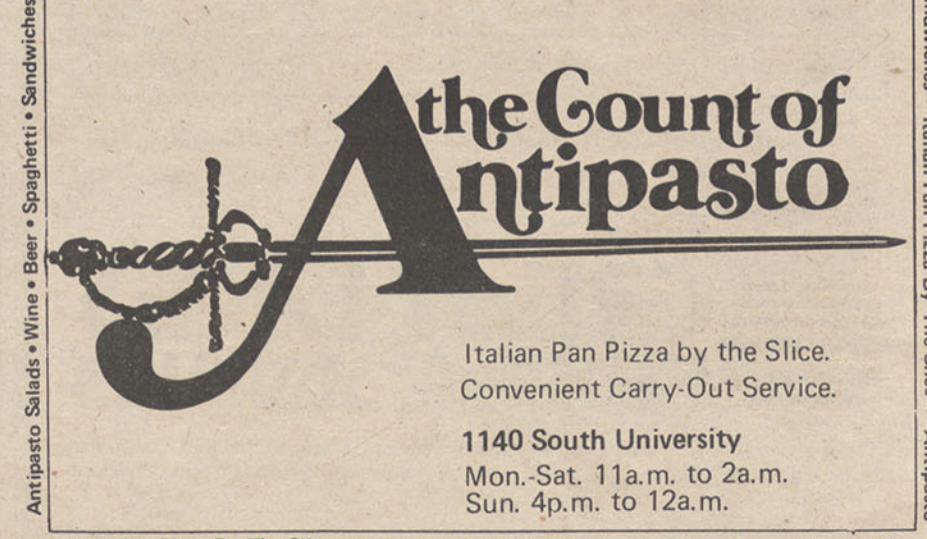
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*Taxable account assumes 50% bracket, \$3,750 deposit, 4% interest

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But the government, you protest, can't possibly be interested in helping you to grow flowers and vegetables under glass. You're right. However, the passive solar systems it is interested in just happen to involve spacious glass-enclosed areas where suitable growing temperatures prevail day and night. If you wish to view your arrangement of glass and heat-absorptive walls as a greenhouse, that's your own business. When it comes time to offer proof that you qualify for tax credits, you'll save yourself a lot of explaining to the IRS if you don't use the word greenhouse. "Large-area solar collector" is the term they like to hear.

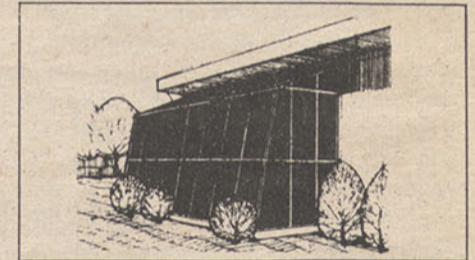
There are rules — lots of them. You must have a south-facing exposure. The glass has to be angled steeply (the degrees are specified) to make the best use of the sun's winter angle. The wall facing the glass area must be made of an efficient heat-absorbing material. Vents must be placed at the top and bottom of the wall to establish convection currents that will carry heat into the house. And there's lots, lots more.

Everything you need to know to start planning in a realistic way is available at

Sunstructures Inc., 201 E. Liberty (994-5650). Sunstructures shares an address with the Michigan Solar Energy Association, a non-profit solar energy promotion and lobbying group. While Sunstructures is a builder of solar energy devices, it nevertheless is generous in counseling people who want to build their own projects. Sunstructures will also advise other builders, for that matter. *The Passive Solar Energy Book* is on sale for \$11 at its office.

How much you can save in fuel costs with such a device depends on its size and on all the variables (like wind exposure and efficiency of insulation) that affect the cost of heating your house now. What can be stated with more certainty is that you will be able to grow houseplants in profusion all year 'round and start garden plants in early spring.

The state tax credit is 25% of the first \$2,000 and 15% of the next \$8,000. Tax credits are money subtracted directly from the tax you owe. So a \$5,000 greenhouse/solar heating system would end up costing only \$4,050. Donated labor or "sweat equity," by the way, cannot be counted into your costs.



Prudence suggests that interested homeowners study the project carefully and verify our facts with the IRS. Remember, don't put them off with dreamy talk about greenhouses. You are thinking of building a "large-area solar collector." It's the latter, not the former, the government wants to subsidize.

Free firewood in the city.

The American elm is not much honored for its beauty. People are always bad-mouthing the characteristics of its wood. They say it is extremely difficult to split, a poor cabinet wood, and has burning characteristics that make it unsuitable for use as fuel. Worst of all, diseased elm wood, which harbors the spores of the Dutch elm fungus, is said to be such a hazard to remaining healthy elms that it should be immediately destroyed by burning or by burying it deep in the ground.

Now along comes a note from Professor Emeritus Carlton Wells to tell us that elm wood is, in fact, a useful fuel. Moreover, diseased elms felled after August 1 cannot spread disease if they are all burned up before the first flight of the elm bark beetle, which takes place around the first of May. The Wellses have been using elm wood, which burns slowly, in their fireplace. By mixing it with faster-burning varieties of hardwoods, they find it entirely satisfactory. Because of its poor reputation, elm wood can be had for the asking from the people who remove trees

from private property. Only the more slender branches will prove feasible for home use, however. Elm is indeed almost impossible to split without powerful mechanical log-splitters. A chain saw, though, makes short work of cutting the smaller branches into useable lengths.

Learn from a private tree removal like McFarland's where it is cutting down elms. Then you can cut off the branches with a chain saw and have free firewood. But be sure to use it up by May.

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LETTERS

Neurosis or higher expectations?

I'll bet Ralph Heine's comments in your article "Is Psychotherapy Worth It?" as to why there is such a great continued demand for psychotherapy evoked some smiles of derision from the ranks of the psychiatrists. Heine suggested that a lot of people seeking psychotherapy do so not because of some deep-seated "neurosis," but because of the ever-higher criteria we Americans are using to measure our happiness. No doubt Heine's simple,

common sensical view strikes most psychiatric professionals as archaic, accustomed as they are to labeling and explaining the human unhappiness that causes people to seek therapy in such a way that a treatment (*their treatment*) is the necessary cure. Maybe Dr. Heine is old-fashioned, but I suspect the last laugh will be on the psychiatrists.

James R. Mitchell

Psychotherapy article unfair

I was disappointed to see the *Observer* descend from its usual journalistic standards in Don Hunt's article questioning the effectiveness of psychotherapy in the December issue. Since Mr. Hunt had clearly drawn his conclusions before doing the interviews, he had nothing new to say about the psychotherapy question. Worse, however, he exploited the interviewees, using them merely to make his points: (1) that there is no evidence for the efficacy of therapy, and (2) that the rates are too high (the implication being, I suppose, that it is all right to charge *moderate* rates for ineffective treatment).

Regarding the first point, the scientific investigation of psychotherapy is an extremely complex issue to deal with in a few paragraphs — but if Mr. Hunt were going to raise the issue, as he did in the Heine interview, he might at least have given Dr. Shevrin a chance to respond to

it, rather than cross-examining him about fees. If this had been done, Mr. Hunt might have learned something about the shortcomings not only of psychotherapy but also of psychotherapy research (most of which is seriously flawed).

Regarding the second point, it is not necessary to question the efficacy of therapy to be concerned about the cost. Many therapists are concerned about this and have chosen to work in clinics where people can receive therapy for little or no money.

There are many people for whom Dr. Heine's self-help groups are not enough. They do not have time to wait for the "scientific evidence" to come in. Don Hunt, who should know better, has contributed to their dilemma by clouding an already complex issue.

Michael Jackson

Down with 'in' high school fashions!

I would like to comment *In Defense of "The Wall"*.

As a teenager of the '50s, I had hoped I'd seen the bigotry, bias and devastating social caste system of that time buried (or at least attempts at excavation made in that general downward direction) by the children of the '70s. There seemed to be, in the past 20 years, a real effort at understanding *individuals*. Gone, it seemed, were blanket judgements of books by their covers, character by social status, and birds of "certain" feathers.

But, lo! Out of the Fitzgeraldesque past comes Annette Churchill with "What's 'In' in High School"—an article meant to report teen fashion trends that ends up giving the teens of today a glimpse of "the way it was"—unfortunate! Unfortunate, then, that peer group pressure from the "In" few could have such a soul-scarring effect on the majority who were "not." Unfortunate, now, that this new and hopeful, more knowledgeable and caring, more openminded and sensitive generation of teens be exposed to, let alone judged by, a throwback to an era well-shed. And just when it looked like the mental damage done to the "non-preppies" of the world was nearing its overdue demise.

It would be a pity if society never learned from past mistakes. I still honestly believe we will never regress to the point where the be-all and end-all of life is belonging to a certain clique or dressing

in a certain style. And I would hope never again to see an article in print that holds up a particular group for emulation—implicitly rendering all the "outsiders" somehow unworthy and inferior.

I don't believe the teens themselves would've been as venomous in judging each other as the author of this article was in her comparison of high school "ins" and "outs." But there it was — implied or explicit, "à la Churchill": if you are a member of a certain group, you are a winner, well-dressed, well-groomed and popular. If you are, however, *not* one of the chosen few, you are allowed the hollow existence of the peacock or, worse yet, doomed to the drop-out/Neanderthal level — careless, hopeless, slovenly and/or socially or physically comatose — appropriately and literally outcast to "The Wall."

This fatal literary detour from fashion to typecasting is an unforgivable error in this day of different strokes. Maybe this "Johnnie" can read, and maybe she can even write, at least technically, rather well. But Ms. Churchill obviously doesn't know the first thing about what's "in" or "out." Her article — misnamed — should have stuck with what was "out"(side).

It's *people* — discovery of self and others *inside* — that's really "in" in high school.

Anne J. Davis

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The perils of writing about fashions

Rah rah *Observer!* The articles on high school rituals are almost as amusing as the National Lampoon's *High School Yearbook*, and make it pretty clear that nothing has changed much.

It's all there — direct from central casting, the principal rapping about "pride in self and school," giving the whole thing the appropriate moral sanction, followed by the standard lists of game rules and costume requirements ("there are many acceptable looks a student can adopt"), but with such hilarious additions as Churchill's incessant use of the word "clean," and the bit about how brand name and designer jeans have become the "great common denominator."

"Fun" is serviceable as usual, notwithstanding the brief reference to the stuck-up girls with all the money for clothes threatening to burn your house down (giggle). Fashion articles work as well as they did in the 50's and 60's — (1) inform teenagers of what they are obliged to find relevant, (2) tell them how much "fun" they're having at it, and (3) wind it up with a statement like "there is no monolithic style to which all must adhere or be cast out." Is gratitude in order?

Mary Roth

Praise for the Black English story

I've just read "Behind the Black English Case." It's intelligently conceived, well-written, and basically right.

Sincere congratulations,
Dan Fader

The article by Anne Remley, "Behind the Black English Case," is the type of story that is making the *Observer* Ann Arbor's leading publication. Keep up the good work!

Jane Joliat O'Neal

I found your story, "Behind the Black English Case," a penetrating look at a national problem. I hope it gets national attention.

Elizabeth Barron

A note from the comix king

A much belated note of thanks for the knock-out job you did on the layout for

Elise's article. I have had a magnificent public response to it. I keep seeing new inquisitive faces poking through the door, wondering if it is safe to enter. By the time they leave, their attitudes have usually altered.

I hope you feature more behind-the-scenes articles on local business folk. Your coverage on "Drake's Sandwich Shop" should be used as the prototype for future views at some of Ann Arbor's finest residents. There have to be some great stories behind "Casa Dominick's," "Krazy Jim's Blimpy Burgers," "David's Books," "Pizza Bob's," "Schlenker's Hardware" and a hundred other nooks and crannies. Go to it.

Norm Harris

P.S. There are no kings of comics!

A question of discrimination

The December article on 'The Recent Mass Exodus at City Hall' implied that the City of Ann Arbor was found guilty of discriminating against two Planning Department employees. This article was in error. During the investigation of allegations by these two employees, the complaints were resolved to the satisfaction of the Michigan Civil Rights Department. A finding of discrimination was not made, and the complaints were dismissed by the Michigan Civil Rights Department.

Martin W. Overhiser
Planning Director

The two employees referred to in Mr. Overhiser's letter, E.L. Weathers and James Blake, both black, filed employment discrimination complaints with the Michigan Civil Rights Commission. The Commission investigated the complaints, as well as another complaint by former Planning Department employee John Morton. An extensive report by Commission investigators declared that "[t]he investigation did disclose evidence of unlawful discrimination against [Morton] and his fellow black employees." As a result of the report, the Planning Department agreed to modify its evaluation procedures and improve other procedures to insure that black employees were not treated unequally. Records of disciplinary actions taken against Weathers and Blake were removed from their personnel files.

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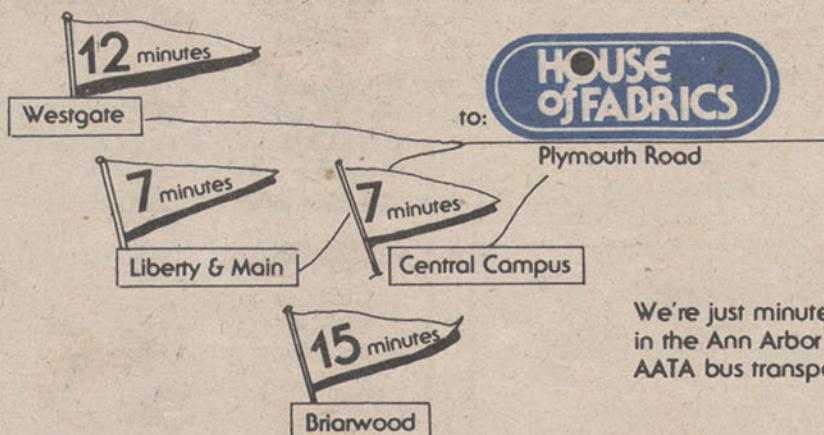
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